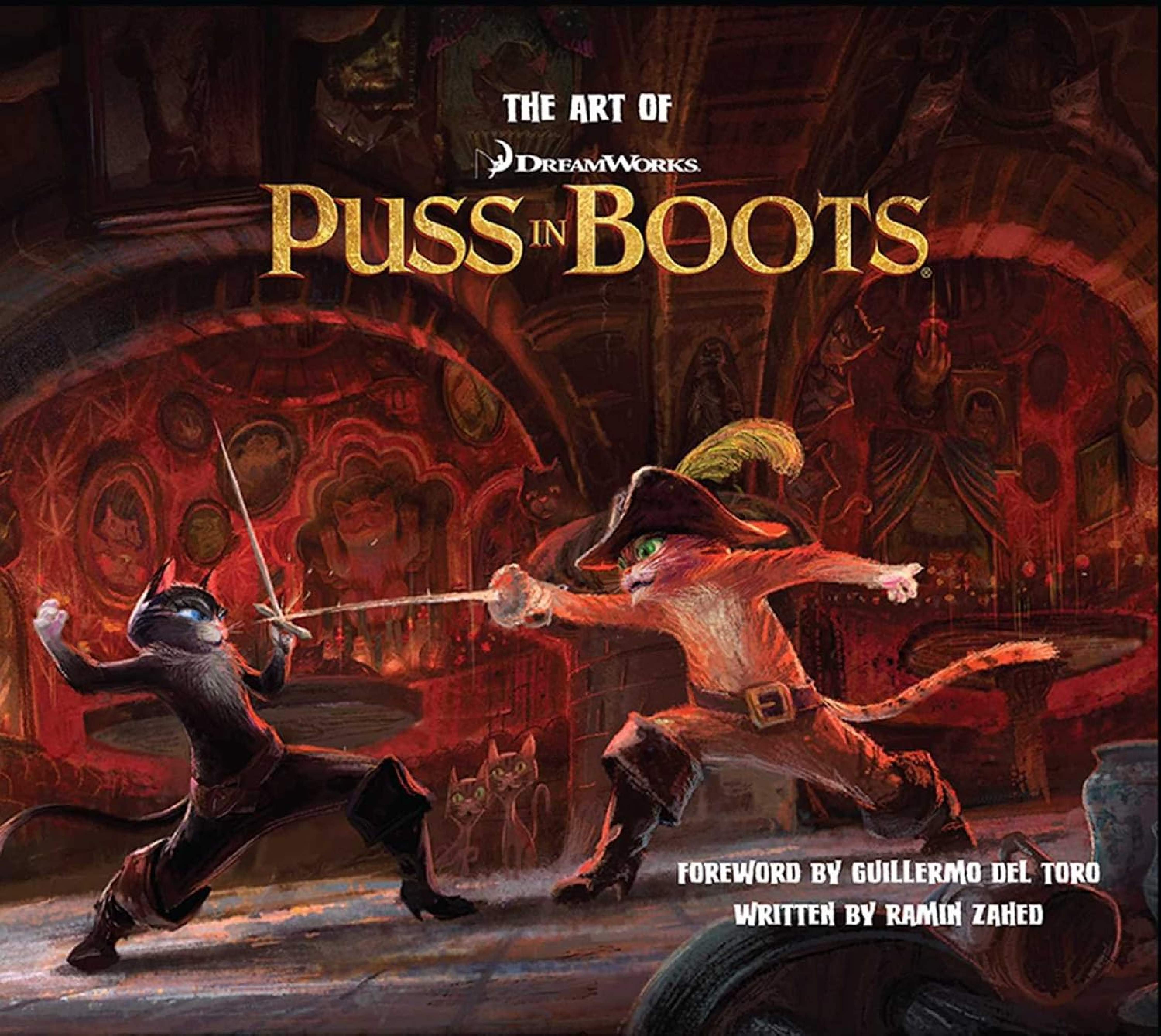
THE ART OF DREAMWORKS PUSS IN BOOTS®



FOREWORD BY GUILLERMO DEL TORO

WRITTEN BY RAMIN ZAHED

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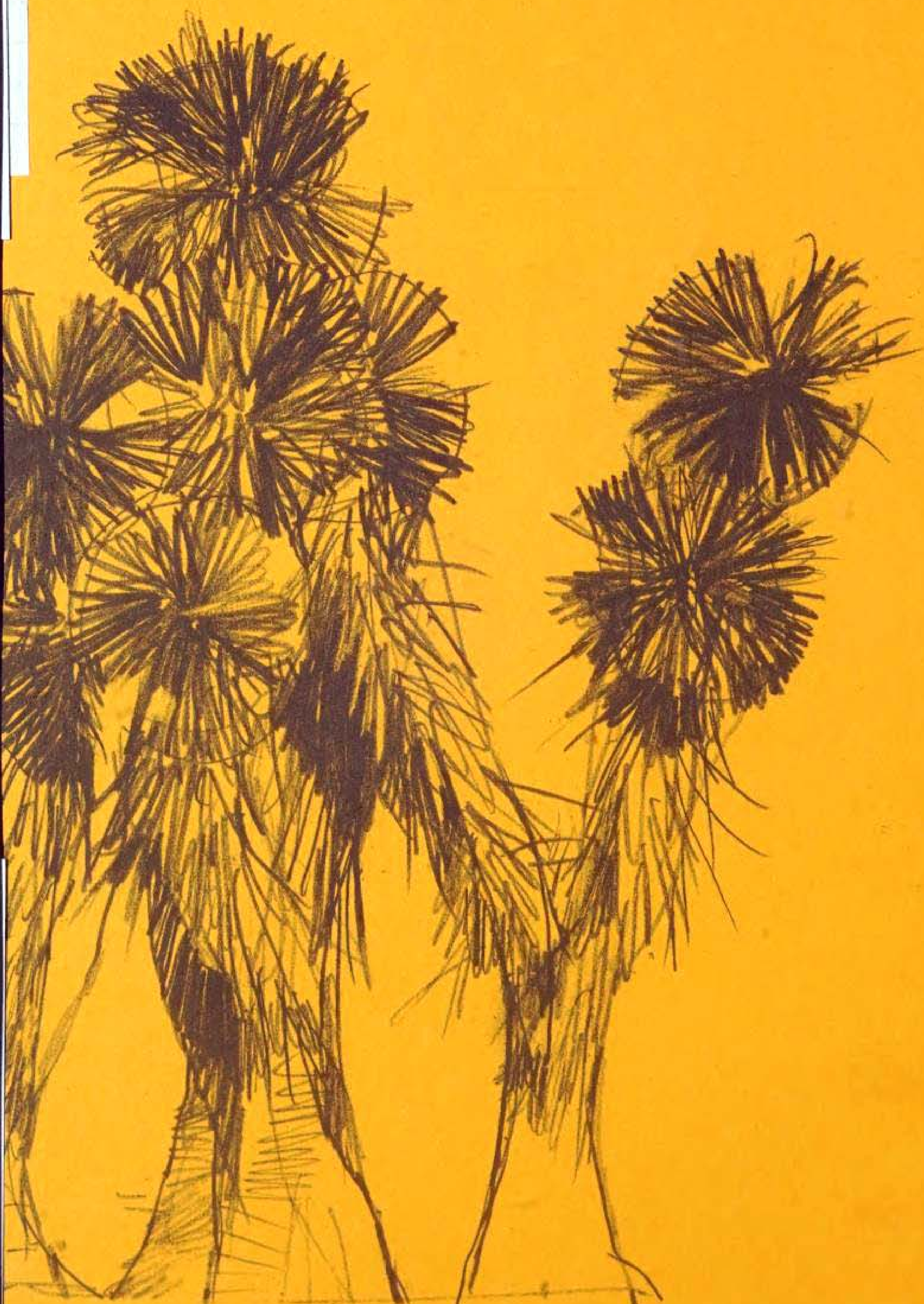
THE ART OF

DREAMWORKS

PUSS IN BOOTS

SINCE HIS DEBUT IN *SHREK 2*, Puss In Boots has been one of DreamWorks Animation's favorite characters. The aptly titled *Puss In Boots* finally places the daring feline in the spotlight, telling his tale with the appropriate dose of dramatic bravado.

The Art of Puss In Boots is the story of how the filmmakers at DreamWorks Animation approached the ambitious task of crafting a world and backstory colored by Puss's unique personality. This book's wealth of art and commentary conjures up a land full of intrigue, romance, and Latin flair. Populating the swashbuckling adventure is a cast of fellow rogues and fairy-tale characters, including Puss's childhood friend Humpty Dumpty, feline fatale Kitty Softpaws, the outlaw couple Jack and Jill, and a Mama Goose that you definitely don't want to mess with. *The Art of Puss In Boots* is a tribute to the hard work and creative talents behind the making of this *guapo* movie.



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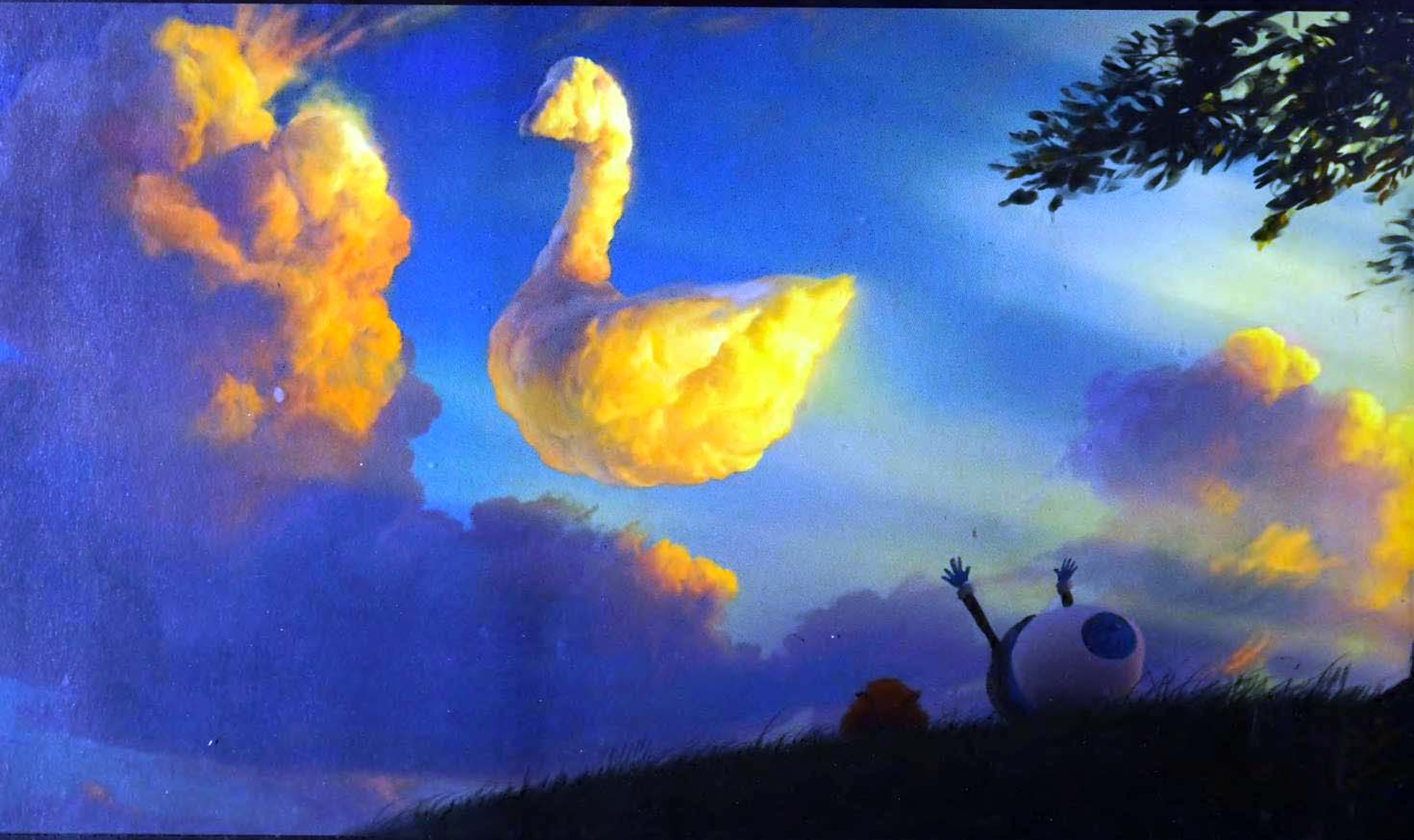

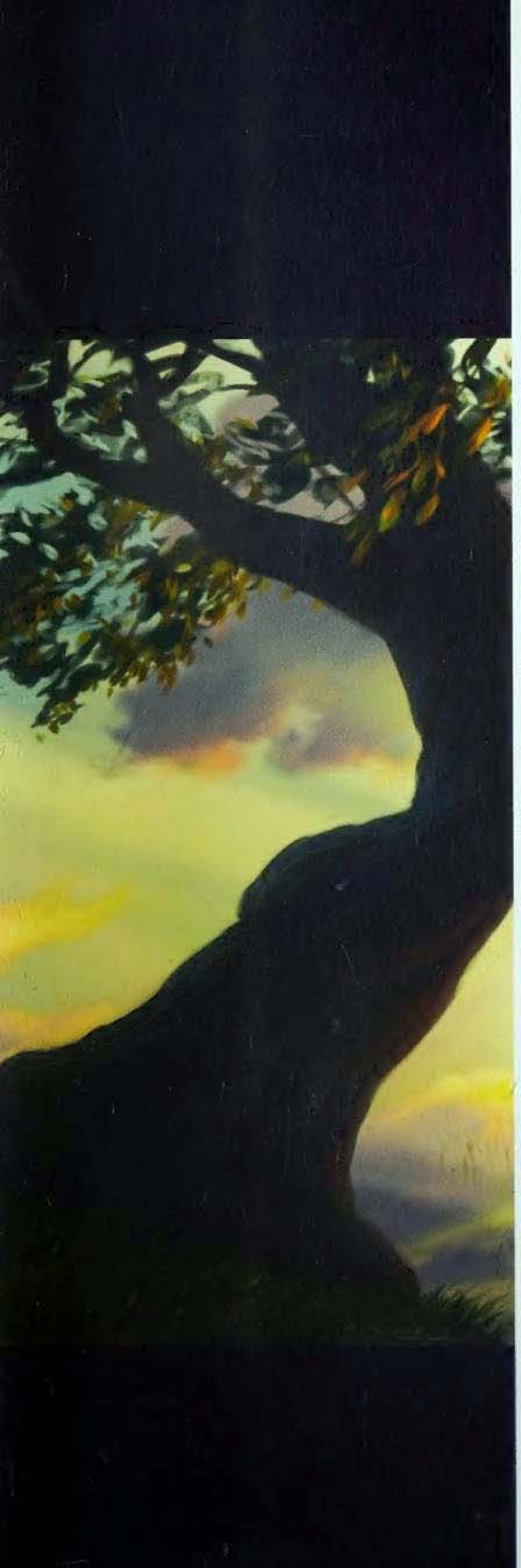

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The Art Of DreamWorks Puss in Boots

Foreword by Guillermo del Toro
Written by Ramin Zahed

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San Rafael, California

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Page 2 | Daydreaming | Peter Zaslav | digital
Right | Puss Saves Kitty | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

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CONTENTS

Foreword: It's All in the Images by Guillermo del Toro 7

Introduction: Puss in His Own Picture 11

Characters 16
- Character Design 19
- Puss In Boots 27
- Humpty Dumpty 33
- Kitty Softpaws 37
- Imedla 41
- Jack and Jill 43
- El Comandante and His Mother 49
- The Bartender and Bar Patrons 50
- Little Boy Blue 51
- Old Prisoner 51
- The Great Terror and The Golden Goose 53
- Getting Technical: Feathers 55
- The Giant 57
- Background Characters 59

Locations 60
- Latin Landscapes 63
- Getting Technical: Light and Shadows 64
- The Farm 67
- The Southern Town 69
- Harbor Saloon 72
- Hotel Del Toro Negro 76
- Cat Cantina 80
- Getting Technical: Dust Particles 85
- San Ricardo 87
- The Orphanage 90
- The Bean Shack 92
- Storefronts 96
- The Bridge 98
- The Prison 102
- The Canyon 105
- The Planting Ground 107
- Out of Picture: The Tower and the Surreal Landscape 108
- The Beanstalk 110
- The Cloud World 119
- Getting Technical: Planting Beans and Building Clouds 120
- The Castle 123
- Out of Picture: The Goose Rotunda 128
- Getting Technical: New Growth in VFX 132

Bringing It All Together 135
- Sequence 500: Building the Cat Cantina 137
  - Story 137
  - Visual Development 138
  - Modeling 141
  - Surfacing 142
  - Rigging 142
  - Lighting 143
  - Visual Effects 144

Conclusion 149

Acknowledgments and Colophon 152

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Foreword
It's All in the Images

It was love at first sight. The art did it.

When I first came onboard at DreamWorks Animation, both CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg and chief creative officer Bill Damaschke insisted that I take a tour around the projects they thought would energize me. As part of this tour, I was taken to see the key frames and concept art for *Puss In Boots*. I was mesmerized. This was not what I expected from a spin-off or a sequel. The amount of thought, love, and craftsmanship that was in front of me spoke not of a derivation but of the creation of a whole new world.

Through the many months of the process that ensued, we have all stayed true to what was shown to me that very first day. We all enforce and support the vision that was promised in the seminal art generated under the vigilant eye of *Puss In Boots* director Chris Miller.

Chris knows Shrek's world intimately, and thus, he avoided the mistake of trying to be different for difference's sake. We have all endeavored to treat the audio-visual design of this film as film writing—as a storytelling tool.

The world of Puss exists on many planes and, wisely, transits through them, renewing our awe at each turn: The supersaturated colors and vivid textures of the Cat Cantina sharply contrast with the arid Sergio Leone–esque vistas and Spanish-Turkish shapes of the dust-bowl town of San Ricardo. We rocket through the veil of a magical aurora borealis and into an effervescent landscape of Maxfield Parrish–like, glowing clouds somewhere over the rainbow . . .

And each of these steps clearly represents the rite of passage of both Puss and Humpty Alexander Dumpty—their rise from a world of dust and into the heavenly gold that lies above and within—accessible to all of us who dare to dream.

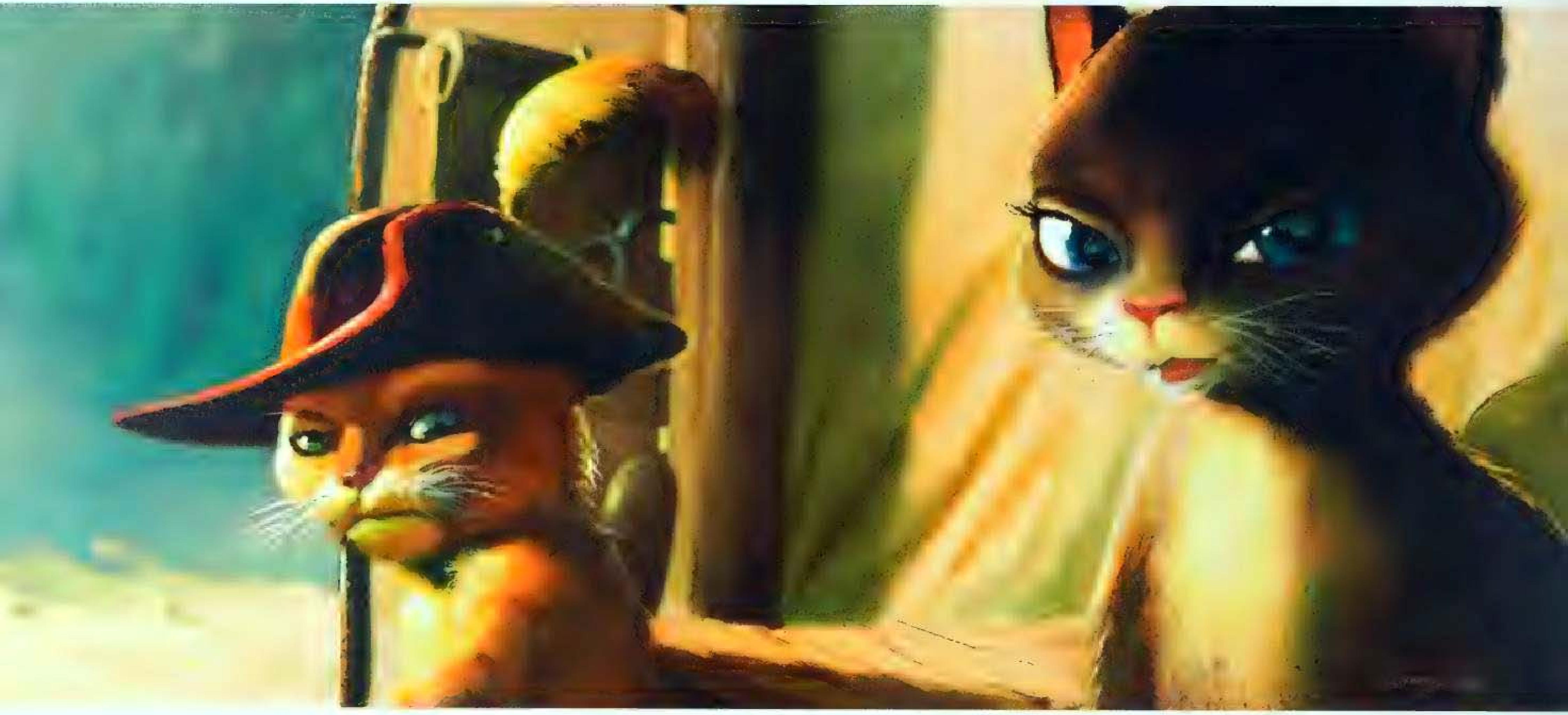
Crucial choices have been made early enough—in the very pieces of art you hold in your hands today—choices that are daring and original: dense atmosphere and haze suffused with light; genre-bending chiaroscuro and dark shapes looming dramatically around our characters; images of unexpected beauty and power in a children's tale. But these are all choices that deliberately create the world in which Puss exists both as a legendary lover (really, it's crazy!) and a master adventurer of mythic stature.

This world has been populated with fantastic characters and inventions, and the craft and eye for detail that has gone into creating it will easily rival that of any production in any medium. Puss is deadly serious about his business, and we all are deadly serious about creating and filling the world around him. The humor and wit that lie within the pages in this book are the foundation of an edifice that requires hundreds of people and thousands of hours of intense, demanding work. It all starts with the art. Right here. Right now.

Take the journey with us.

—Guillermo del Toro

Opposite, top | Puss Realizes They Are Caught | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Puss and Imelda | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Top | El Comandante | Patrick Maté
Center | Executive producer Guillermo del Toro | photograph by Nicola Goodel/ICG Magazine
Following pages | Sequence 1000 Matte Painting | David Bailey | digital



INTRODUCTION
PUSS IN HIS OWN PICTURE

While there has been no shortage of memorable sidekicks in the world of animation, few have been able to steal scenes and hearts as quickly and effortlessly as Puss In Boots. The debonair, swashbuckling tabby, voiced in silken-tone perfection by Spanish actor Antonio Banderas, was such an instant charmer that some time after his introduction in DreamWorks Animation's *Shrek 2* in 2004, the studio decided he needed to star as the hero in his own movie.

In the new feature, appropriately titled *Puss In Boots*, audiences get the chance to learn about Puss's kitten days in an orphanage, where he forms a close brotherly bond with a young Humpty Dumpty (voiced by Zach Galifianakis). It's during those formative years that the two begin to dream about finding a castle above the clouds and acquiring the resident giant's prized possession: a goose that lays golden eggs. A seductive female cat fatale known as Kitty Softpaws (Salma Hayek) and the villainous duo Jack and Jill (Billy Bob Thornton and Amy Sedaris) are among the other questionable characters Puss meets in this adventure.

"Originally, we had developed a story loosely based on the classic Charles Perrault fairy tale, which involved Puss and three sons of the miller," producer Joe M. Aguilar recalls. "However, the studio decided to go back to the drawing board and flesh out a new story told on a grander scale—something that would be more worthy of such a larger-than-life character."

Once this was decided, the creative team on *Puss In Boots* set out to make sure the project had an original flavor of its own. "One of my personal goals was to make sure the movie was quite different from the Shrek movies," says Aguilar. "It was important for us to stay away from the usual earmarks of spin-offs."

As producer Latifa Ouaou points out, the movie would not be possible without the lead character's magnetic personality. "The

Opposite, top | Puss and Kitty Get to Know Each Other 2 | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina, s79 | Lighting by Alberto Noti | digital
Above | Early Puss Snarl | Peter Zaslav | digital

character of Puss In Boots made it easy for us to get excited about creating something new," she says. "He's bold, romantic, and full of color and flavor, and he's got more swagger and style than any other cat in Spain. We could only imagine that the world he came from would have the same attributes. Truth be told, he's such a handsome feline that he looks good in any environment."

To keep the hero's journey as rich and multidimensional as possible, the artistic team explored various influences, including the spaghetti western movies of Sergio Leone. In a subtle tip of the hat to Leone's classic gunslinger tales shot in Spain, the filmmakers set their movie in southern Europe, building a colorful setting that matched Puss's Spanish origin. This pan-Latin atmosphere also created a warmer color palette than the one used in the Shrek quartet, delivering a more photorealistic landscape of reds and yellows. "Puss was my favorite character in all of the Shrek movies," recalls *Puss In Boots* director Chris Miller, who also helmed *Shrek the Third* (2007). "Here was this character with a great sense of bravado, romance, and charm. Even as a sidekick in *Shrek 2* and *3*, he always seemed to have this aura of history and mystery. You always wanted to know where he came from and what his story was, although there had been a few tidbits about his past in the other movies."

Also of great importance to the director was not losing sight of the emotional elements of Puss's tale. While the story unfolds in a colorful, legendary world, what keeps audiences enthralled is finding out about the key events in the diminutive hero's life that made him the cat he is today. "One of our biggest challenges was coming up with a story that would resonate on a deep emotional level," notes Miller. "We were lucky to end up with this classic redemption story featuring this brave, nomadic lover. Of course, as the drama becomes more serious, the jokes become funnier as well because we have a tiny cat at the center of this powerful material."

Miller, who has been with DreamWorks Animation since the early days of *Antz* (1998), admits that exploring the origin story of Puss proved to be quite a liberating experience for him and the rest of his creative team. "There were certain things that we have held on to that are the touchstones of the Shrek films, but we are now exploring the more fantastic legends behind the fairy tales. It's a more otherworldly universe, both in terms of story and visuals."

The way head of story Robert Persichetti Jr. sees it, Puss is such a unique character that he has dictated the tone of the films in which he's been featured from the very moment he was introduced in *Shrek 2.* He points out that while Puss is part Zorro, part Indiana Jones, and part Clint Eastwood–type cowboy, he also has several weaknesses, which make him even easier to admire. "We felt very lucky that our leading man isn't a straight, boring character, which can happen a lot in movies," adds Persichetti. "Puss is never outshined by any of the other characters."

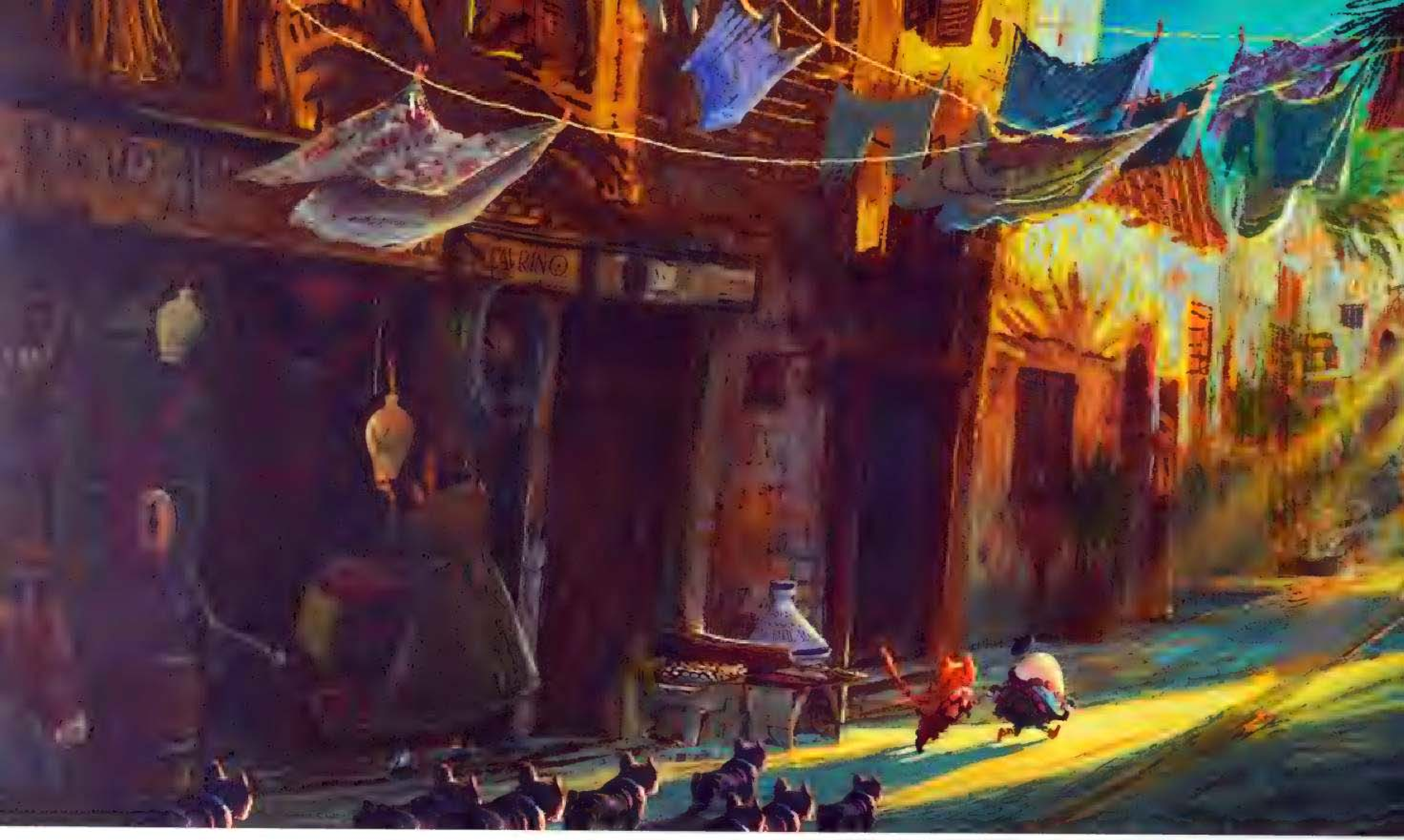
Many of the film's key creative team members believe that it's Puss's tenuous relationship with Humpty and their common dream of finding The Golden Goose that gives the story its powerful Dickensian momentum. "We knew we wanted to team him up with a fairy-tale character that wasn't a sidekick," explains Aguilar. "Somebody pitched Humpty Dumpty, and the whole notion of having this giant egg be a central character in the movie felt absolutely right."

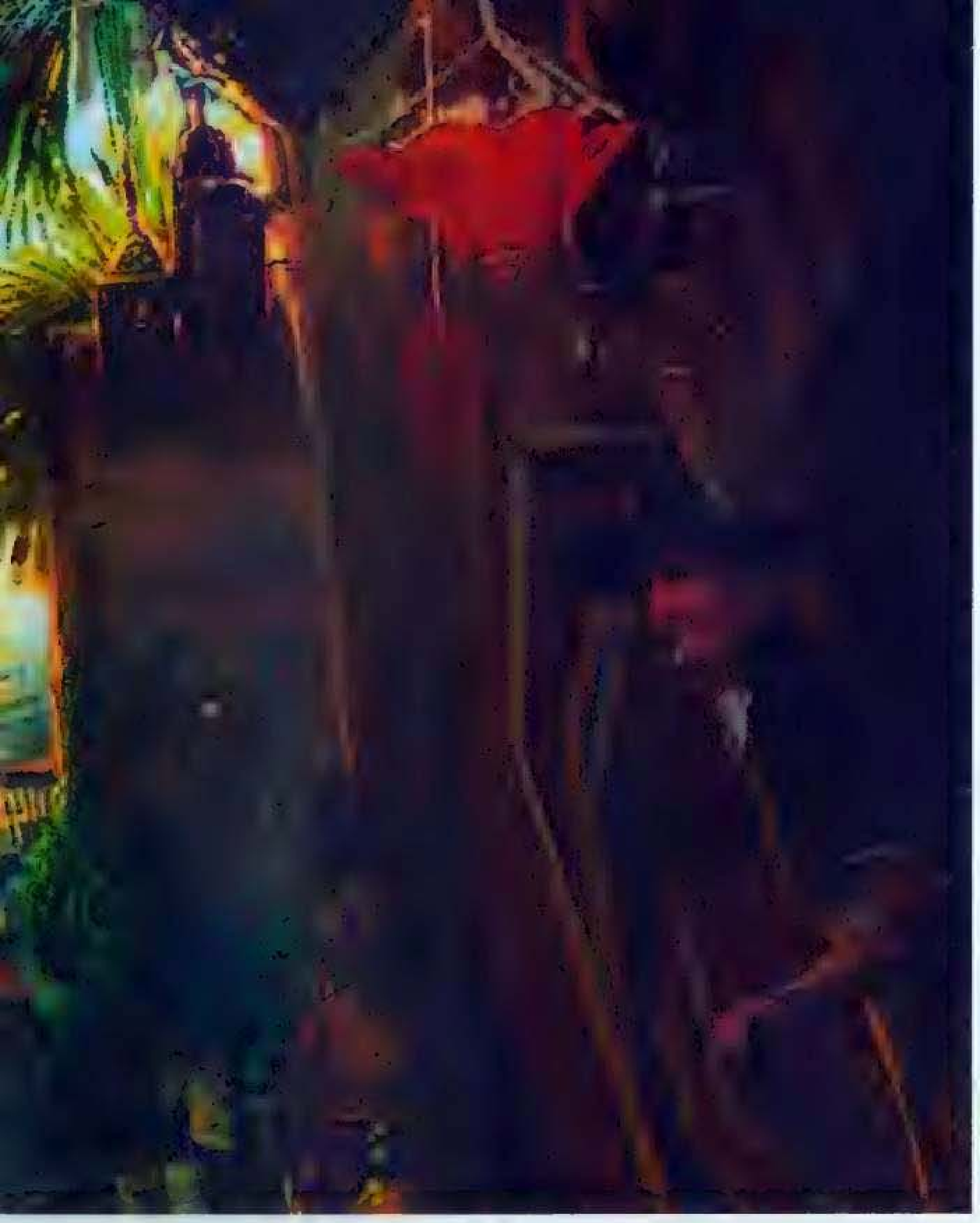
"You can find a little bit of Clint Eastwood, James Bond, Zorro, and even Indiana Jones in Puss In Boots. He is a combination of all the legendary archetypical heroes and adventurers in cinematic history." —Chris Miller, director

The film's strong story line and prominent characters are supported by stunning visuals and sophisticated animation. "I think it pushes the boundaries of CG character animation," notes Miller. "The comedy is smart and funny, but visually, we are attempting to do things that I haven't seen in other animated movies. The world of Puss and all these magical characters could only exist as an animated project, so I think that's why we felt justified to tell his story in such an elaborately crafted way."

Helping the project scale new heights was the fact that Puss's adventures could now be told in stereoscopic 3D. Audiences can enjoy the visuals even more as they are immersed in the sights and sounds of this journey, which takes him from a charming Spanish town to the magical world of a giant's castle high above the clouds.

Opposite, top | Humpty Begs Puss for Help | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Early Puss Concept | Chris Aguirre | digital
Right | Early Puss Sketch | Chris Aguirre | pencil





"The tone of the movie is quite different from anything else we've worked on because the plot is very dramatic, but a little kitty cat who is full of machismo is in the center of it all. The comedy is driven purely by the characters, not from the situations."

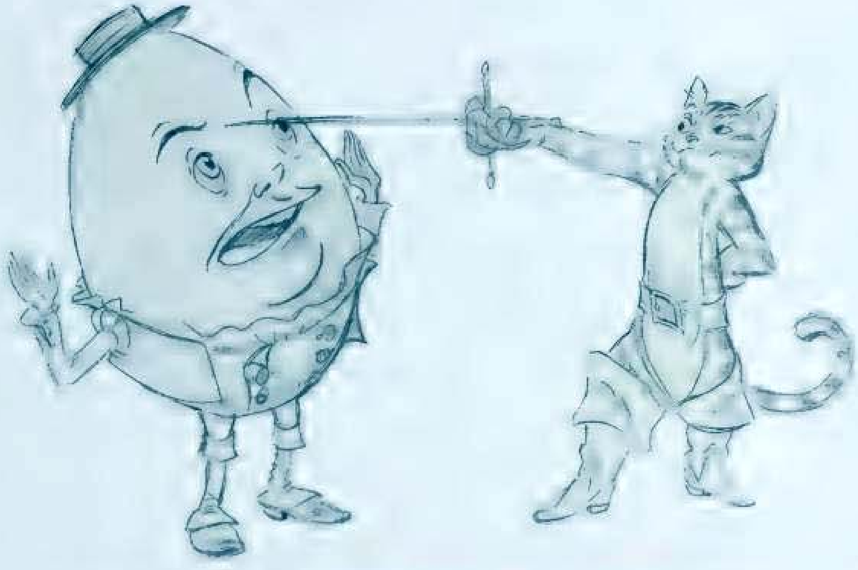
—Joe M. Aguilar, producer

Drawing inspiration from a wide range of sources, including Spanish artist Francisco Goya, Spanish modernist architect Antoni Gaudí, and the natural landscapes of southern Spain and Latin America, the artistic team spent more than two years creating stunning backdrops for Puss and his companions. The details of each character design, location, and plot point were meticulously polished, tested, and perfected to enhance the glorious world of our feline adventurer. The result is a special kind of family entertainment that has its roots in the powerful fairy tales of the seventeenth century, while it manages to be relevant and captivating for twenty-first-century audiences. It casts its spell by utilizing the latest 3D technologies, but its charms are not reliant on the usual boundaries of place and time. Thanks to the hard work, creativity, and vision of the team at DreamWorks Animation, the world of *Puss In Boots* is bound to stay in the hearts and minds of animation lovers for years to come.

Top | Puss and Humpty Play in the Streets | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, far left | San Ricardo | Christian Schellewald | digital
Opposite, middle | Southern Town Harbor Art | Facundo Rabaudi | model
Left | San Ricardo Building Façades | Paul Westacott | digital

CHAPTER 1

CHARACTERS



CHARACTER DESIGN

Once the film's key characters were narrowed down to Puss, Humpty, Kitty, and Jack and Jill, and the roles of minor figures such as Imelda, El Comandante, The Great Terror, and The Golden Goose were determined, the job of the character designers began.

Because *Puss In Boots* is an origin story about a character introduced in the Shrek universe, it must have some visual connection to that fairy-tale world. Yet the artists were encouraged to work more freely and explore the epic tone and fantastic nature of the lead character's adventures. Even the miscellaneous background characters in the movie were specifically created and shaped for this adventure.

It's easy to appreciate lead character designer Patrick Maté's fondness for sophisticated caricatures. His witty style is reflected in the general look of many of the residents of Puss's hometown of San Ricardo and the Southern Town, where Puss reunites with childhood friend/adopted brother Humpty. Maté and the other designers found inspiration in classic illustrations, faces of movie stars, and the work of their favorite Spanish artists as they populated Puss's world with its new cast of characters.

"The movie allowed us to really play with an epic, legendary style of storytelling, which is reflected in the visual style. It was quite liberating for us to enter this fantastic, otherworldly realm."

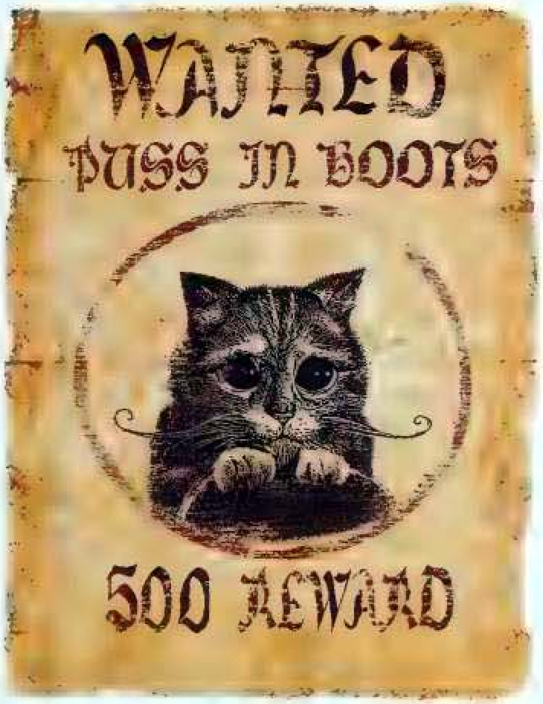
—Chris Miller, director

Previous pages | We Got Goose | Nathan Fowkes | digital
Opposite, top | Puss and Humpty Look Down on the World | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Puss Continues His Story | Richard Daskas | digital
Top | Early Humpty Sketch | Patrick Maté | pencil
Following pages | Puss and Humpty Trick the Townspeople | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

ACT II

ACT III

These pages | Color Script | Nate Wragg | digital



PUSS IN BOOTS

"Before I was the legend, I was the outlaw. And what can I say? I was a bad kitty!" That's how our hero describes himself in the opening voice-over of the movie, which provides the audience with a pretty apt description of what they are about to learn about Puss in this clever origin story.

First designed by Tom Hester for *Shrek 2*, Puss was partially based on cats owned by *Shrek* director Andrew Adamson and visual effects supervisor Ken Bielenberg. "Andrew had initially given pictures of one of his cats as reference," says Bielenberg. "I proposed that because Donkey was grey, Puss needed to be different, so I suggested an orange tabby and brought in pictures of my own cat, an orange tabby named Lucifer."

After Antonio Banderas was cast in the role, the animation team studied the Spanish actor's performance in the 1998 movie *The Mask of Zorro* for inspiration. "It has come to the point that it's really hard to tell Antonio apart from Puss," jokes director Chris Miller.

Puss, whom his enemies describe as *el diablo gato* (the devil cat), continued to intrigue and inspire the artists and animators who brought him to animated life as they began to renovate the character model and associated rigging for his starring role. Head of character animation Fabio Lignini says one of the first things they had to do was update the character's rigging and tweak the surfacing so he would look his best in close-ups and key acting shots. "The main difference technically was that we could achieve a wider range of expressions because the rigging was revamped and all the controls are more powerful and subtle than in his

"I was always amazed that even as a sidekick character in *Shrek 2* and *3*, Puss always had this great sense of history and mystery. You immediately want to know where he comes from and who he really is. He seems to have been everywhere and done it all."

—Chris Miller, director

Opposite, top | Showdown with the Giant | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom, far left | Seeing the Golden Eggs | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, bottom, middle left | Puss in the Desert | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, bottom, middle right | Puss and Boxers | Richard Daskas | digital
Opposite, bottom, far right | Puss In Boots Heroic | Nathan Fowkes | digital
Above | Puss Wanted Poster | Emil Mitev | digital

previous movies," says Lignini. In addition, Puss's boots, hats, swords, and belt all got upgrades for the picture.

Character designer Patrick Maté admits he had a lot of fun creating the two younger versions of the cat for the movie. It's hard not to smile when you see Puss as a kitten wearing the famous leather boots and the wide-brimmed cavalier hat, which are clearly too big for him.

The animation team also studied a lot of live-action cats because Puss is imagined as a realistic cat. He was posed without his famous belt, sword, and boots and matched with real-life footage of cats in motion. Because he is rigged and modeled as a biped and wears boots all the time, the artists had to contort him into being a quadruped on certain occasions. "We had to find moments here and there where he is acting like a real cat, especially when he runs as a quadruped," says Lignini. "There are very quick moments, but they are absolutely necessary."

Above | Lucifer, visual effects supervisor Ken Bielenberg's cat | photograph by Ken Bielenberg
Far left | Early Mini Puss In Boots | Patrick Maté | digital
Left | Adolescent Puss In Boots | Patrick Maté | digital
Bottom | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina | Lighting by Gregory Yepes | digital
Opposite, right | Mini Puss Turnaround | Patrick Maté | digital

Opposite, top | Puss Leaves the Farmhouse | Nathan Fowkes | digital
Opposite, bottom | Humpty and Puss, Blood Brothers | Nate Wragg | digital
Above | Early Puss Concept | Guillaume Aretos and Steve Pilcher | digital
Right | Puss in Cape | Paul Lasaine | digital
Below | Puss and Kitty | Patrick Maté | digital sketch

HUMPTY DUMPTY

When it comes to being a colorful, complex, and multilayered character, Humpty Dumpty can easily hold his own against any of Hollywood's memorable movie villains. As kids, Puss and Humpty formed a strong bond at the orphanage in San Ricardo, but a series of betrayals destroyed their friendship and kept them apart until later in life.

The little egg-man character, first introduced in early nineteenth century in a Mother Goose nursery rhyme collection, provides the story with much of its emotional and narrative energy. Character designer Patrick Maté studied classic illustrations of Humpty for inspiration. "I particularly liked the drawings that depicted him as sympathetic and friendly," notes Maté. "We wanted to play against character, because he ends up being more deceitful in the end. In a way, he is more like the original Puss character in the Charles Perrault story, who tricks and manipulates people. That role is played more by Humpty and Kitty in the movie."

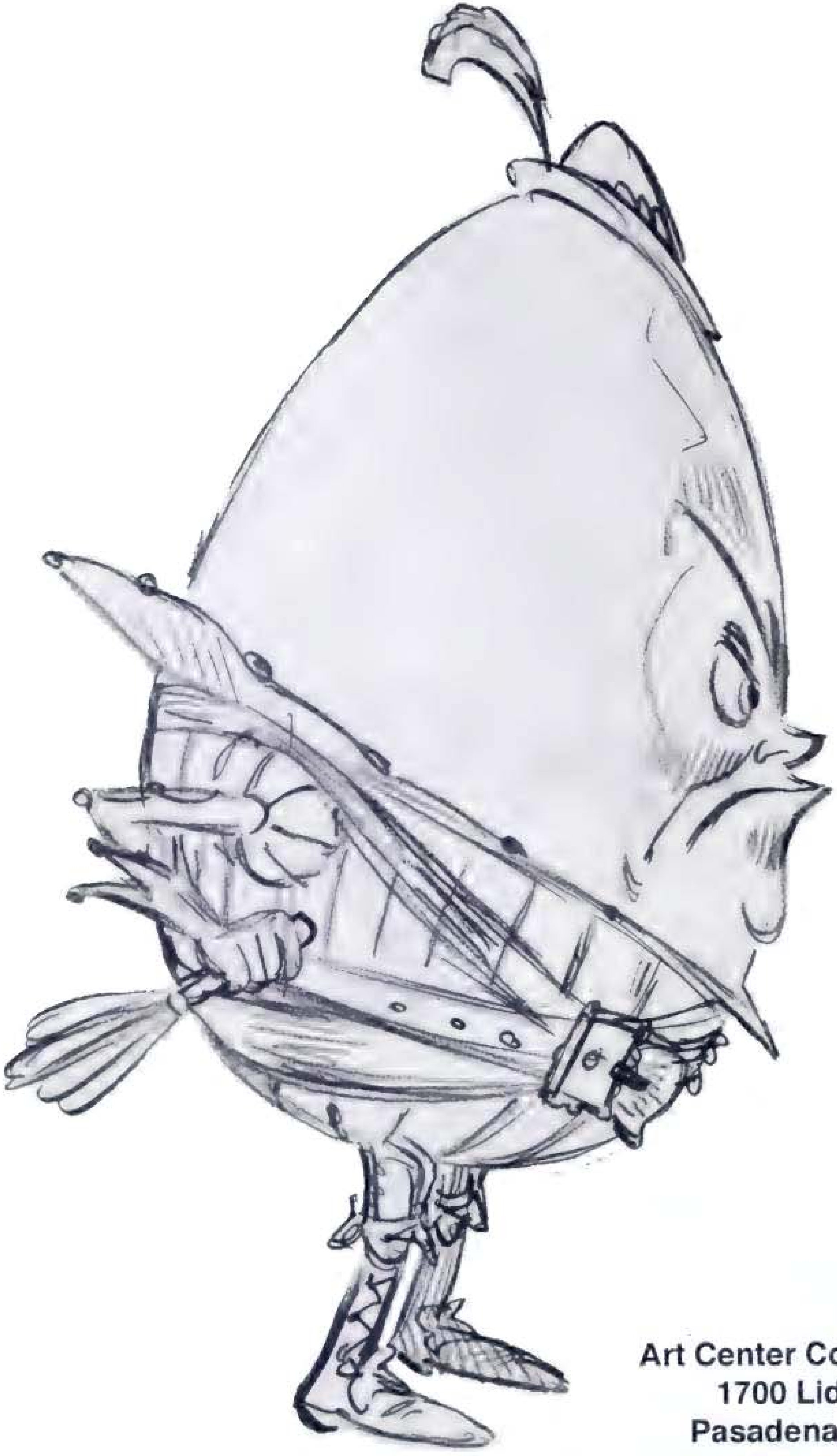
Designing the egg character had its own share of ups and downs. He looked a bit odd with bare hands, so the character design team decided that gloves were essential. Plus, he has very short arms—so short that he can't even scratch his nose. This obviously complicated things when the character had to drive a high-action sequence and pull off major heists.

As with all great designs, Humpty went through several changes until the final look was approved. Maté is happy that certain ideas didn't come to pass. "I remember that at one point, Humpty had a big crack on his head," he says. "Then there was the time when we wanted him to have a kind of a cooked, yellow coloring. That just looked weird, so luckily he went back to being a regular eggshell color."

"Humpty is both a complicated and brilliant character. You can see him as a Leonardo da Vinci–like genius pushed to make mistakes by the hardships in his life."

—Guillaume Aretos, production designer

Opposite | Humpty Dumpty | Paul Lasaine | digital
Top | Early Humpty Sketch | Patrick Maté | digital



Top | Early Humpty Costume Design | Patrick Maté | digital
Above | Early Humpty Costume Design | Patrick Maté and Isis Mussenden | watercolor
Left | Early Humpty Character Pose | Patrick Maté | pencil
Bottom | Humpty Cracks into Golden Egg Progression | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Opposite, top | Humpty Plays in the Clouds | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Humpty Calculates in the Wagon | Kirsten Kawamura | digital

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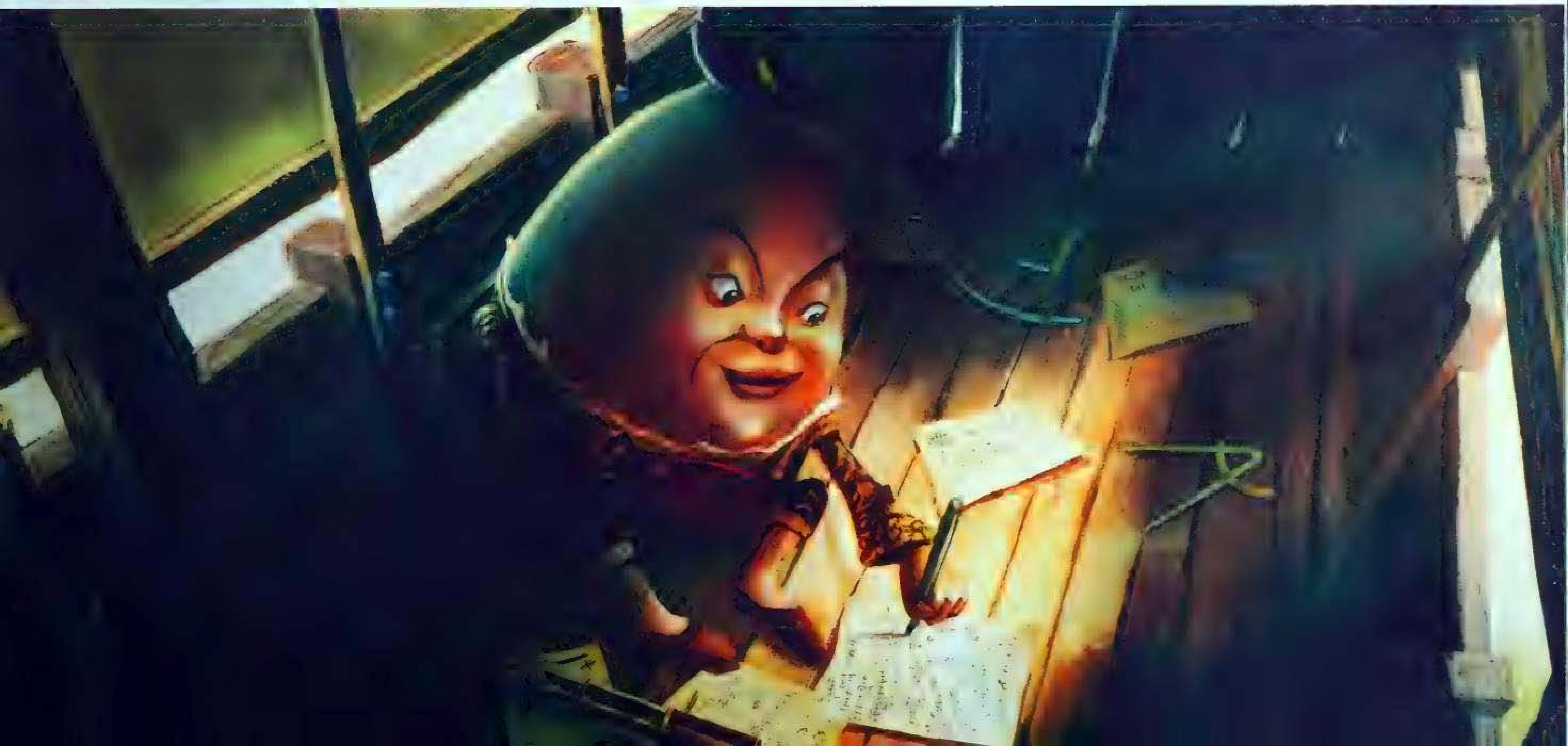
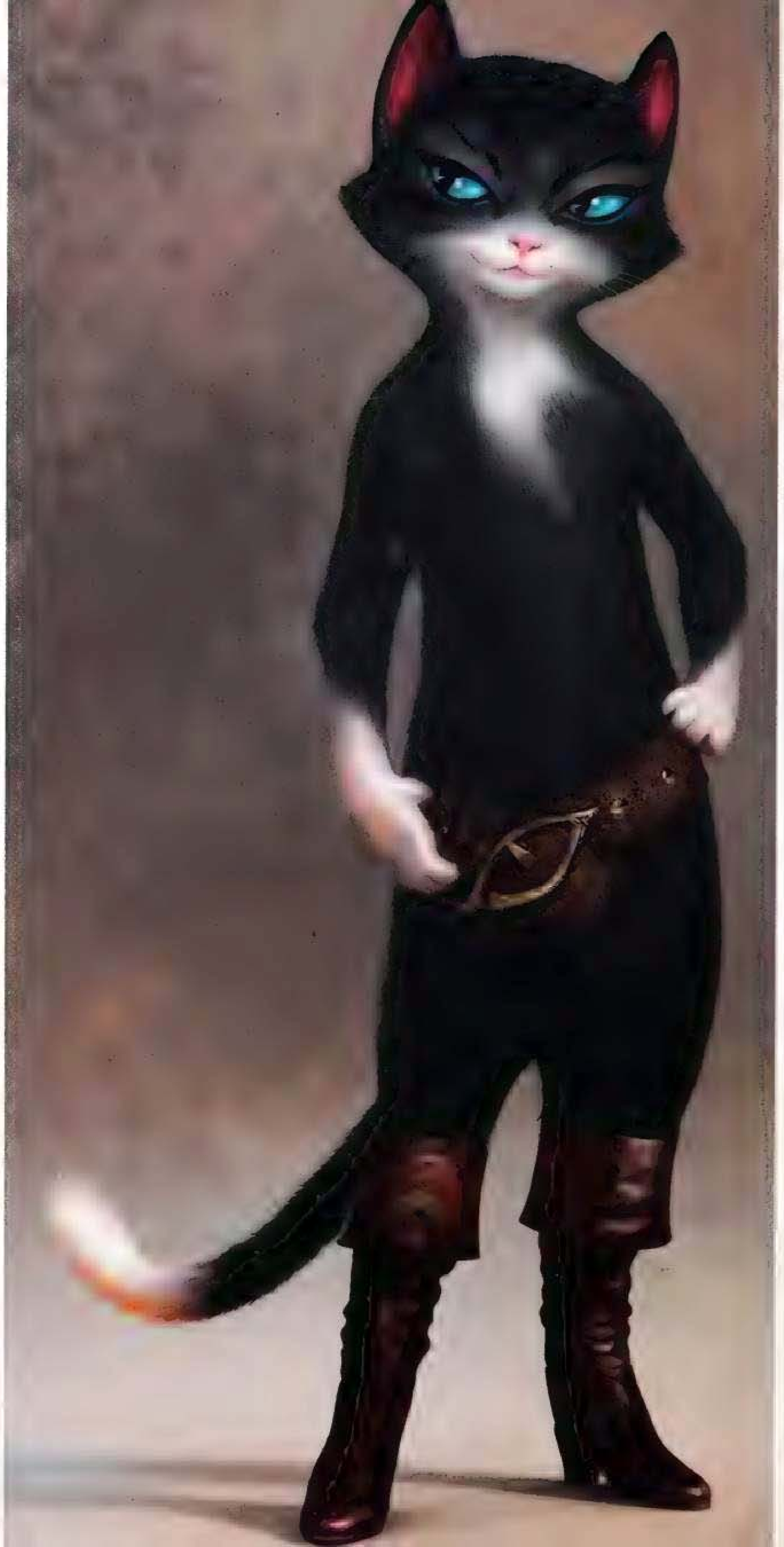




KITTY SOFTPAWS

You can't really have a satisfying adventure without a female lead who steals the hero's heart and may or may not be the greatest love of his life. However, nobody expected Kitty Softpaws, voiced in all her sultry magnificence by Salma Hayek, to be such a difficult creature to design and animate.

Kitty evolved from being a slick Mata Hari–esque female cat of mystery to a more rounded, tomboyish figure. She had to match Puss's realistic feline designs, but she also needed to have a feminine allure and be anthropomorphic to a certain degree. Supervising animator Steven "Shaggy" Hornby studied lipstick-camera footage of Salma Hayek's facial movements to make Kitty's face appealing and emotive, but because she is a black cat with white markings, he and his team also had to pay extra attention to the readability of all her expressions.

"The brow and eye area was very black in the beginning, and it was very tricky to show emotions, so we had to go back and revisit the coloring and add a little bit more white in the brow area to get her to emote and read clearly," explains surfacing and textures supervisor Ken Hebert. "What works in the art department may not play in the animation test when she's performing, so we had to rework the fur, keep it shorter, or play with the colors."

Although Kitty's feline-fatale visuals proved difficult to nail down in the beginning, the experience proved that it is always worth it to go back to the drawing board and reconfigure a design until it can really work in animation.

"We had a running joke about Kitty's color, 'Oh wait, it's too black. Oh, no, it's too gray!' But that's because we didn't want her to be just an ordinary cat. We really wanted her to stand out."

—Patrick Maté, character designer

Opposite | Early Kitty Character Designs | Patrick Maté | digital
Top | Early Kitty Sketch | Patrick Maté | pencil

Opposite, top | Puss Begins the Story of His Past | Richard Daskas | digital
Opposite, bottom | Puss and Kitty Get to Know Each Other | Dominique Louis | digital
Above | Early Kitty Sketches | Patrick Maté | pencil
Right | Kitty | Patrick Maté and Peter Zaslav | digital
Below | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina | Bob Logan | digital

IMELDA

Who could imagine that Italian auteur Federico Fellini's *Amarcord* played a role in the way Imelda, the maternal figure at the orphanage, looks in the movie? As production designer Guillaume Aretos recalls, Imelda used to be a small, slender woman, loosely based on a variety of classic Mexican actresses.

But that was before Guillermo del Toro joined the team as executive producer and suggested that she needed to be bigger and rounder, like the Italian mama characters he loved in Fellini's movies. "We did that immediately, and it was a fast and efficient improvement," says Aretos with a smile.

"What seems to be very effective in this story is the relationship between the characters. A lot of it is because of the innate charm of the Puss character."

—Joe M. Aguilar, producer

Opposite, top left | Early Imelda Character Design | Patrick Maté | digital
Opposite, top middle | Early Imelda Character Design | Guillaume Aretos | digital
Opposite, top right | Imelda | Patrick Maté | digital
Opposite, bottom | Early Imelda Sketches | Patrick Maté | pencil
Above | Early Imelda Sketch | Patrick Maté | pencil

JACK AND JILL

We never uncover the mysterious backgrounds of the movie's very odd hillbilly criminals, Jack and Jill. What we do know is that they are shaped like two giant boxes, they're out to get Puss In Boots, and they would love to adopt a child or a baby boar. Character designer Patrick Maté says director Chris Miller asked him to imagine them as big, burly football-quarterback types. The animators also looked at many live-action heavies in spaghetti westerns.

"It's hilarious to hear Billy Bob Thornton and Amy Sedaris voicing these characters with a certain hillbilly sensibility," says producer Joe M. Aguilar. "Most of their story line deals with them wondering whether they should have kids or not, and it's really fun to watch these horrible, odd characters find their way through this movie."

"We had a lot of fun with Jack and Jill. Chris Miller told us that he wanted them to look like football players, so we created these two rough-looking, square-shaped figures."

—Patrick Maté, character designer

Opposite | Early Jack and Jill Character Design | Patrick Maté | digital
Top | Early Jack and Jill Sketch | Patrick Maté | pencil

HAMHOCK

Longtime DreamWorks Animation artist Peter Zaslav came up with the look of the baby boar known as Hamhock using an adult-boar design by character designer Patrick Maté and a sketch by artist Ronald A. Kurniawan. "For Hamhock's fur, I found a halfway point between the dark, coarse adult-boar hair of Patrick's design and actual baby-boar fur, which is softer and has a distinctive pattern," says Zaslav. The key to the success of Hamhock's design was to have a perfect balance of very cute and very ugly.

Opposite, top | Early Jack and Jill Sketch | Patrick Maté | pencil
Opposite, bottom | Early Jack and Jill Costume Designs | Isis Mussenden | watercolor
Above | Hamhock | Peter Zaslav | digital
Right | Jack and Jill | Design by Patrick Maté; Surfacing by David Valdez, Jeremy Engleman, and Carson McKay; Lighting by Shanna Lim | digital
Following pages | The Poker Game | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

El Comandante and His Mother

San Ricardo's chief officer of the law has a square jaw, tough-guy demeanor, and no-nonsense attitude. And the fact that he is voiced by executive producer Guillermo del Toro lends the character a truly commanding Latin presence.

Designer Patrick Maté says El Comandante was easy to design, as he reminded Maté of some of the sturdy Latin characters in DreamWorks Animation's *The Road to El Dorado* (2000). "He's strong but not mean—definitely mama's favorite boy!" he explains.

El Comandante's mother is a round-shaped elderly woman, whom Puss saves after Humpty accidentally releases a charging bull near the marketplace. Maté describes her as a "little Spanish *matryoshka* who is almost completely blind, even though she wears jam jar–bottom glasses—a mixture of Mr. Magoo and Dr. Bleeb from *We're Back! A Dinosaur's Story*."

Opposite, top | Puss Takes Down the Bull | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom | Puss and Humpty Are Caught | Dominique Louis | digital
Top | El Comandante | Patrick Maté | digital
Above right | El Comandante and His Mother | Patrick Maté | digital

The Bartender and Bar Patrons

Director Chris Miller wanted the seen-it-all bartender to sport a bushy mustache like the one seen on Kurt Russell's Wyatt Earp in the 1993 western *Tombstone*. The leather-faced patrons of the bar were inspired by the classic heavies of the spaghetti westerns of the mid-'60s.

Top | Thief Shows Puss His Tattoo | Richard Daskas | digital
Right | Bartender and Bar Thieves | Patrick Maté | digital
Opposite, top | Little Boy Blue | Patrick Maté | digital
Opposite, bottom left | Prison Cell Interior | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, bottom right | Ancient Prisoner | Patrick Maté and Peter Zaslav | digital

LITTLE BOY BLUE

A classic storybook bully who torments young Humpty during his years at the orphanage, Little Boy Blue was designed by Patrick Maté as a double homage to *Poil de Carotte* (Carrot Head) by French author Jules Renard (1866–1910) and Megamind, the lead character from DreamWorks Animation's 2010 feature film. "He really stands out since he is blue and has bright red hair," says art director Christian Schellewald. "But he is just your typical bad guy. He terrorizes Humpty, who can't defend himself, until Puss comes to his rescue." Overall, the creative team didn't want Humpty and Puss to be the only fairy-tale or nursery-rhyme characters in the orphanage, so they made a conscious effort to include other familiar faces. "In the early illustrations for the sequence, there's even a moon and a cow—a nod to the cow that jumped over the moon," says Schellewald. "At one point, we even thought about adding a fork and a spoon as background characters, but that would have been too weird."

OLD PRISONER

Puss meets this ancient character with the very long white beard in the third act of the movie, when he is thrown into prison himself. The artists found inspiration in drawings of the biblical patriarch Methuselah, who was said to have lived to be 969 years old, and Abbe Faria, the old prisoner in *The Count of Monte Cristo.* Our hero learns some ugly truths about Humpty's past from the old man, who is actually Jack from the eighteenth-century English fairy tale "Jack and the Beanstalk."

THE GREAT TERROR AND THE GOLDEN GOOSE

The eighty-foot-tall Mama Goose, also known as The Great Terror, took over the role of the Giant as the character who protects The Golden Goose and is feared by all. Character designers Takao Noguchi, Richard Daskas, and Peter Zaslav were inspired by great classic movie monsters such as Godzilla, Rodan, and King Kong to create the creature that wreaks havoc on San Ricardo. The design for her humongous feet is reminiscent of popular depictions of velociraptor feet, including those seen in *Jurassic Park* (1993). Of course, the origins of this character go all the way back to the golden egg–laying magic goose first mentioned in "Jack and the Beanstalk."

In *Puss In Boots*, however, it's not Mama Goose that lays the golden eggs, but rather her chick, the baby Golden Goose. Designer Patrick Maté created several versions of the magical gosling until everyone was able to agree on the final version. The big task here was to create a character that was an adorable bird-like creature but also displayed its magical qualities. What seemed to make the design work was the addition of a golden, iridescent texture to the bird's feathers. "We wanted to make sure some of the feathers had this great shiny, metallic look, and I think that's what made everyone happy in the end," says production designer Guillaume Aretos.

Opposite, top | Puss Returns the Runt | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Opposite, bottom | Mama Goose Picks up Humpty | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Top | Mama Goose Concept | Ronald A. Kurniawan | pencil
Above left | Early Runt | Patrick Maté and Richard Daskas | digital
Above right | Runt | Patrick Maté | digital

Top | Sequence 2700 - Goosezilla Color Key | Woongyoung Jung | digital
Above | Sequence 2700 - Goosezilla Color Key | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Right | Early Decoy Goose | Patrick Mate | digital
Opposite, left | Mama Goose Concept | Takao Noguchi | digital
Opposite, right | Mama Goose | Takao Noguchi | digital

GETTING TECHNICAL

FEATHERS

Creating Mama Goose's feathers required a close collaboration between the modeling, character effects, and surfacing departments. The feathers on the smaller birds in the movie (e.g., the canaries, the crow, and The Golden Goose) were created using proprietary fur shaders developed at DreamWorks Animation.

"We were able to achieve quite an effective look for feathers by using our fur tools without having to model or go through our feather system, which was still in progress for the big Mama Goose," explains Ken Hebert, who led the surfacing and texturing teams on the project. "For Mama Goose, modeling created the geometry of what each feather would look like. Then the character effects department distributed the feathers all over the character's body. Surfacing then took over to put the final material on the feathers and determined how soft or frayed they should be."

THE GIANT

Although Mama Goose, aka The Great Terror, eventually replaced the Giant, the artists had already come up with various interpretations of this famous character from "Jack and the Beanstalk." British comic actor John Cleese initially inspired the design, but director Chris Miller thought storyboarder Mike Bell bore an uncanny resemblance to the classic storybook giant. So the final version of the Giant ended up looking more like Bell than anyone else.

Opposite | Early Giant Character Design | Guillaume Aretos | digital
Top | Early Giant Character Sketch | Ronald A. Kurniawan | pencil
Above | Early Giant Character Designs | Patrick Maté | digital
Right | Early Giant Costume Design | Patrick Maté | digital

BACKGROUND CHARACTERS

What unifies most of the miscellaneous background characters in *Puss In Boots* is a bold caricature style that matches the fantastic realism of the leads and accentuates the surreal nature of their journey. "We caricatured and pushed their faces and body proportions," says designer Patrick Maté of the movie's generics. "We tried to create a greater variety to avoid them all looking the same."

One of the challenges the design team faced was bringing more individuality and sophistication to each face in the crowd without allowing them to distract the audience from the main figures in each scene. The artists took their cues from the character designs for Jack and Jill, making most of the main generics slightly grotesque. The key features for each—hairstyles, costumes, and body shapes—were individually assembled to avoid the sameness of computer-generated crowds. The design team even went in and added some nongrotesque, normal-looking faces one by one to make these characters more believable and accessible.

In the Cat Cantina sequence, the background characters are cats of various shapes and sizes, which presented a unique challenge to the *Puss In Boots* design team: cat extras. Unlike Puss and Kitty, who stand on their two rear legs, these cats are all quadrupeds. Close to thirty different variations on the basic cat model were made for this scene, which meant the team had to come up with different fur lengths, body shapes, and colors for a wide variety of frolicking felines.

"With each movie, we continue to develop better ways of animating humans, with more realistic skin and believable features. The rigging, surfacing, modeling, and VFX teams worked very closely to improve the quality of our generic characters . . . The fact that we could interchange shapes—men, women, kids, etc.—meant we had an astronomical number of variations we could make cheaply by mixing different heads together."

—Tony K. Williams, modeling supervisor

Opposite, top | The Cats Notice Puss Enter | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, middle | Early Generic Orphan Kids | Patrick Maté | digital
Opposite, bottom | Generic Character Lineup | Patrick Maté | digital
Above | Bounty Hunter Surfacing | Patrick Maté | digital

CHAPTER 2

LOCATIONS

Latin Landscapes

Puss's multilayered journey takes him from a southern Mediterranean town to the charming Latin-flavored village of San Ricardo, where he spent his kitten days at an orphanage dreaming of how to get to the Giant's opulent castle above the clouds. The look and ambience of each of the three worlds depicted in the movie were inspired by a wide range of influences, including the spacious landscapes of southern Spain, picturesque Mexican towns, Moorish architecture, and the art of Spanish painter Francisco Goya and nineteenth-century French Orientalists such as Eugène Delacroix and Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres.

The first two main backdrops of the movie are grounded in real-world locations, while the Giant's Castle universe is clearly a dreamlike place, straight out of the pages of a lavish fairy tale.

Art director Christian Schellewald traveled extensively in Spain and Mexico, researching the architecture and the natural world of both countries to get an accurate sense of all the details. The location team looked at a lot of traditional houses, markets, churches, bridges, and taverns in both countries to get a good feel for what the Southern Town and San Ricardo might look like. "We wanted every object and element in our movie to have a history and story behind it," recalls Schellewald, who also worked on Puss's first movie, *Shrek 2*. "We also examined buildings in France and Italy to capture the feel of decay in the older structures."

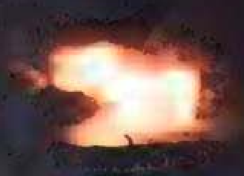
"Because Puss is such a bold, dynamic creature, he demands fantastic, epic locations to match his colorful, exciting stories."

—Chris Miller, director

One point the artists would keep coming back to while they designed Puss's world was that they had a lot of freedom to let their imaginations run wild. "When you are working with two hyperreal cats and a talking egg, you can go crazy with the shapes," explains production designer Guillaume Aretos. "This is a story about double-crossing characters, so we wanted to create twisted shapes that echoed the heart of the story. All of this is grounded in realistic references to Spanish and Mexican villages."

When Puss, Kitty, and Humpty climb the beanstalk and discover the world above the clouds, the artists felt more inclined to explore otherworldly and surreal vistas. For example, the modernist creations of Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí served as a springboard for the asymmetric world of the Giant's Castle. The designers also referenced real castles in the south of Spain and the work of art nouveau masters to shape this fantastic Cloud World environment, one that never ceases to impress despite its relative state of disrepair.

Previous pages | Daydreaming on the Hillside | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite | Southern Town Building Design Concepts | Marcos Mateu-Mestre | digital
Above | Southern Town Building Design Concept | Paul Westacott and Todd Gibbs | digital



GETTING TECHNICAL

LIGHT AND SHADOWS

It's interesting to note that almost one-third of the movie takes place at night. This gave the artists the opportunity to play with shadow projections to evoke mood and atmosphere. Production designer Guillaume Aretos looked at some of the paintings of Francisco Goya to see how the Spanish master depicted his darker scenes and portrayed his tortured characters. In contrast, the twelve-minute flashback to Puss's happier childhood days is warmed by the golden glow of his selective memory.

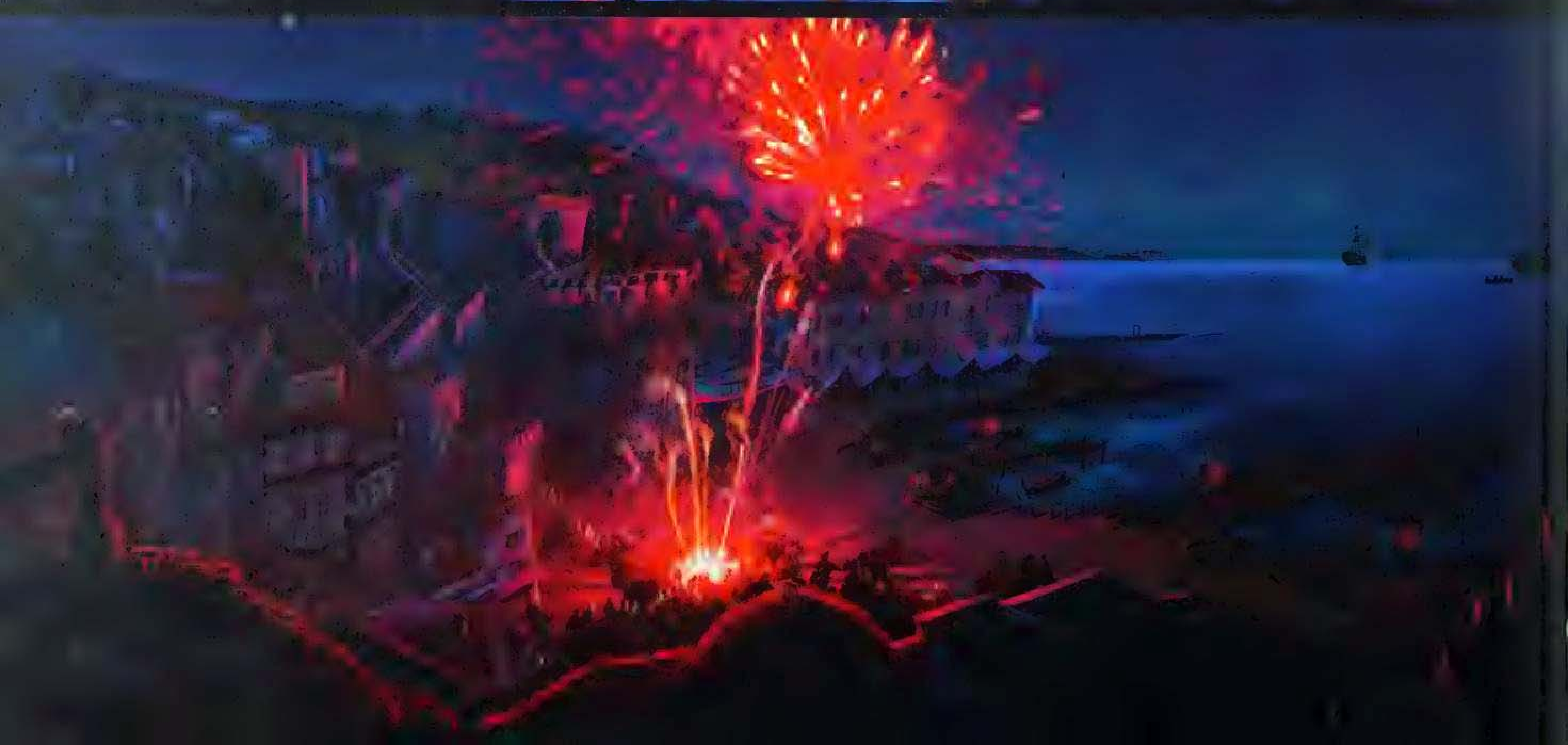
Top | Sequence 1000 | Bill Silvers | matte painting
Above | Sequence 1000 | David Bailey | matte painting
Right, top (group of 6) | Chase Shadow Concepts | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Right, bottom (group of 4) | Sequence 800 | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite | Lighting the Bonfire | Nathan Fowkes | digital

THE FARM

The opening sequence of the movie finds Puss in a rustic farmhouse surrounded by wind-swept olive trees and roaming hills. The landscape is reminiscent of Andalusia in southern Spain, but it also has North African and Mexican flourishes. The scene sets Puss up as an outlaw on the run—a troubled hero who deals with a very challenging daily life but who always finds time for *amore* with the lady cats.

The designers sought to present the farm as a nice but desolate location. To better display how hot and dry this region is, the artists showed that all the plants, even the palm trees, bend in one direction as if they were ducking away from the harsh elements. They also added a slightly surreal touch by regrouping the shrubs in the landscape in repetitive patterns.

Opposite, top | The Farmer Watches Puss Get Away | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom | Farmhouse Landscape | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Top | Farmhouse Romantic Hacienda | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Above | Puss Escapes the Bounty Hunter | Nathan Fowkes | digital



THE SOUTHERN TOWN

In some of the earlier versions of the movie, the seaside town was supposed to be a more glamorous destination—a place Puss and Humpty dreamed of escaping to when they were just a couple of orphans in San Ricardo. However, in the final version, the Southern Town emerged as a much darker, bleaker location. Three of the town's key backdrops are the shady saloon where Puss hears about the outlaws Jack and Jill, the old hotel where he finds them, and the famous Cat Cantina, in which he discovers Kitty.

The Southern Town is a nondescript place that can be confusing and threatening and lends itself well to chase scenes.

"The Southern Town evolved from being a rich and glamorous place to which Puss and Humpty wanted to escape to a seedy harbor town inhabited by shady characters."

—Guillaume Aretos, production designer

The buildings, slightly whitewashed and faded, seem to be cramped together. The intent was to make it plain and monochromatic so that the colorful world of Puss's hometown of San Ricardo would stand out even more in flashbacks.

If you look closely, you'll see a palpable absence of ninety-degree angles, straight lines, and hard-edged geometry. Even the archways aren't really half circles. "You can see that the houses are leaning against each other," notes production designer Guillaume Aretos. "We twisted everything, not only in 2D, but in our 3D treatments as well. Everything has a slight sway to it."

Opposite, top | Puss Jumps across the Rooftops | Paul Lasaine and Marcos Mateu-Mestre | digital
Opposite, bottom | Southern Town Wide Concept | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Above | South Street | Paul Westacott | digital
Following pages | Puss Swings through the Southern Town | Richard Daskas | digital

HARBOR SALOON

The rough bar where Puss makes his grand entrance early in the film could easily be placed in one of Sergio Leone's classic westerns, albeit with a maritime twist. It's a dimly lit watering hole with a fishing motif, frequented by sailors, drifters, and criminals. A greenish and threatening haze fills the corners of the bar, which is populated by the movie's least attractive characters. "This is a rugged, tough thieves' bar, packed with the toughest outlaws in town," says director Chris Miller. "This cat walks in, and all these guys are mocking him, but then he manages to completely turn the tables on them."

Top | Thieves' Bar Elevation Surfacing | Todd Gibbs | digital
Above | Thieves' Bar Liquor and Wine Labels | Todd Gibbs | digital
Opposite, top | Puss Walks to the Bar | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom | Puss Orders a Milk | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

WANTED POSTERS

There's a sense that the wanted posters on the saloon walls may have been put up by the outlaws themselves. These signs have lipstick marks on them, which, as production designer Guillaume Aretos explains, "express the glorification of being wanted. Here, being an outlaw is a desirable thing." Also, to enhance their prestige, the criminals may have marked up the reward amounts printed on the posters.

Opposite, top | Inside the Thieves' Bar | Griselda Sastrawinata | digital
Opposite, bottom | Puss Enters the Thieves' Bar | Richard Daskas | digital
Left | Thieves' Bar Squid Shrine | Todd Gibbs | digital
Above | Thieves' Bar Wanted Posters | Emil Mitev | digital

Hotel Del Toro Negro

The design of the hotel where Puss first meets Jack and Jill is an extension of the general look of the Southern Town. The exterior of the atrium-style building echoes many historic buildings found in Central American towns today. For the inside of the hotel, the artists were asked to recall the worst places they had ever stayed. Cheap bedding, mismatched furniture, tacky paintings, and peeling wallpaper are all part of this miserable, yet memorable, hotel experience.

Top | Hotel Foyer from the Entrance | Nathan Fowkes | digital
Middle | Hotel Exterior Surfacing | Peter Maynez | digital
Above | Hotel Reception Layout | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite, top | Hotel Establishing Shot | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite, bottom | Jack and Jill Enter the Hotel | Dominique Louis | digital

HOTEL

HOTEL DÉCOR

The hotel beds were modeled after hospital beds and cheap Victorian-era replicas. Before-and-after versions of the receptionist's bell were created to reflect how brutishly Jack smashes it when he tries to ring it. There are some clever contemporary touches, such as the EXIT signs and the pamphlet holders, but overall, there was an attempt to keep modern-day references to a minimum. The designers had some fun trying to figure out whether Jack and Jill could actually sign their names or not. They came up with a version of their signatures on the hotel book that simply reads "Jack and Jill."

Top | Jack and Jill Room Layout | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite, left | Hotel Oil Lamp | Todd Gibbs | digital
Opposite, right | Hotel Room Bed | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Left | Hotel Reception Bell | Todd Gibbs | digital
Above | Jack and Jill Signature | Todd Gibbs | digital

CAT CANTINA

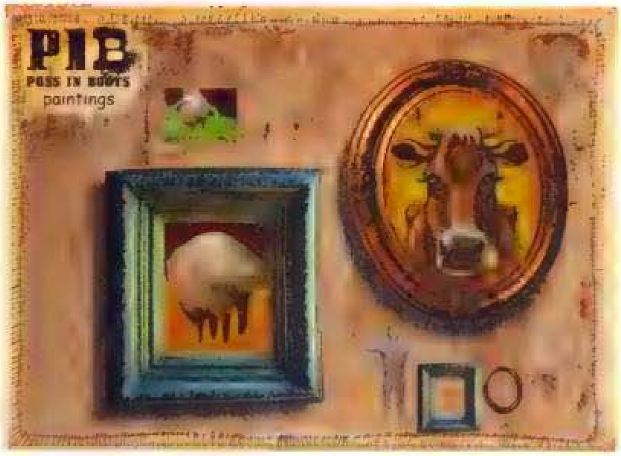
How do you bring a cats' watering hole to animated life? The DreamWorks Animation artists filled numerous sketchbooks with illustrations of all the colorful objects they imagined would fill a cantina where cats go to socialize and down a few glasses of milk. There is a mix of human artifacts and cat objects, but it's never clearly explained how this place became a feline hot spot. "The scale of the bar is human, but the whole place is mysterious," explains production designer Guillaume Aretos. "We don't really know whether the cats have made the art or not." Striking paintings grace the walls of the cantina, and there is a reference to the puzzling rooms of Dutch graphic artist M. C. Escher as well as an homage to Granada's historic Alhambra palace in the form of arches and surface tiles. Not only do these cats know how to stage a Tuesday-night dance-off, but they also have very sophisticated tastes.

"A question that we had to ask ourselves was whether the cats had created their own bar or had simply taken over a human cantina? We finally decided that it was a human bar, but it has a wonderful mix of man-made and cat artifacts. It's an amazing place with its own history and full of rich details, but we never really explain it."

—Christian Schellewald, art director

Top | Cat Cantina Concept Sketch | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, top | Cat Cantina Blue Bar | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom | Cat Cantina Stage Concept | Nathan Fowkes | digital

Above | Kitty Prepares to Battle | Dominique Louis | digital
Right | Puss Enters Back Room | Emil Mitev | digital
Opposite, far right, top | Cat Cantina Paintings | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite, far right, middle | Cat Cantina Milk Cans | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite, far right, bottom | Cat Cantina Floor Mosaic | Kirsten Kawamura | digital



CAT FANCIES

Since the Cantina is frequented by cats, the designers decided to decorate it with a variety of objects with instant feline appeal—fishbowls, caged canaries, milk jars, etc. Bird, fish, and even cow motifs abound on the tapestries and in the floor designs. There are even several cats playing guitars in the bar, but special attention was paid to make sure their musical instruments are similar to the ones heard in the piece by real-life acoustic-guitar duo Rodrigo y Gabriela that accompanies the important dance sequence.

THE MAGIC BEANS AND THE BEAN BOX

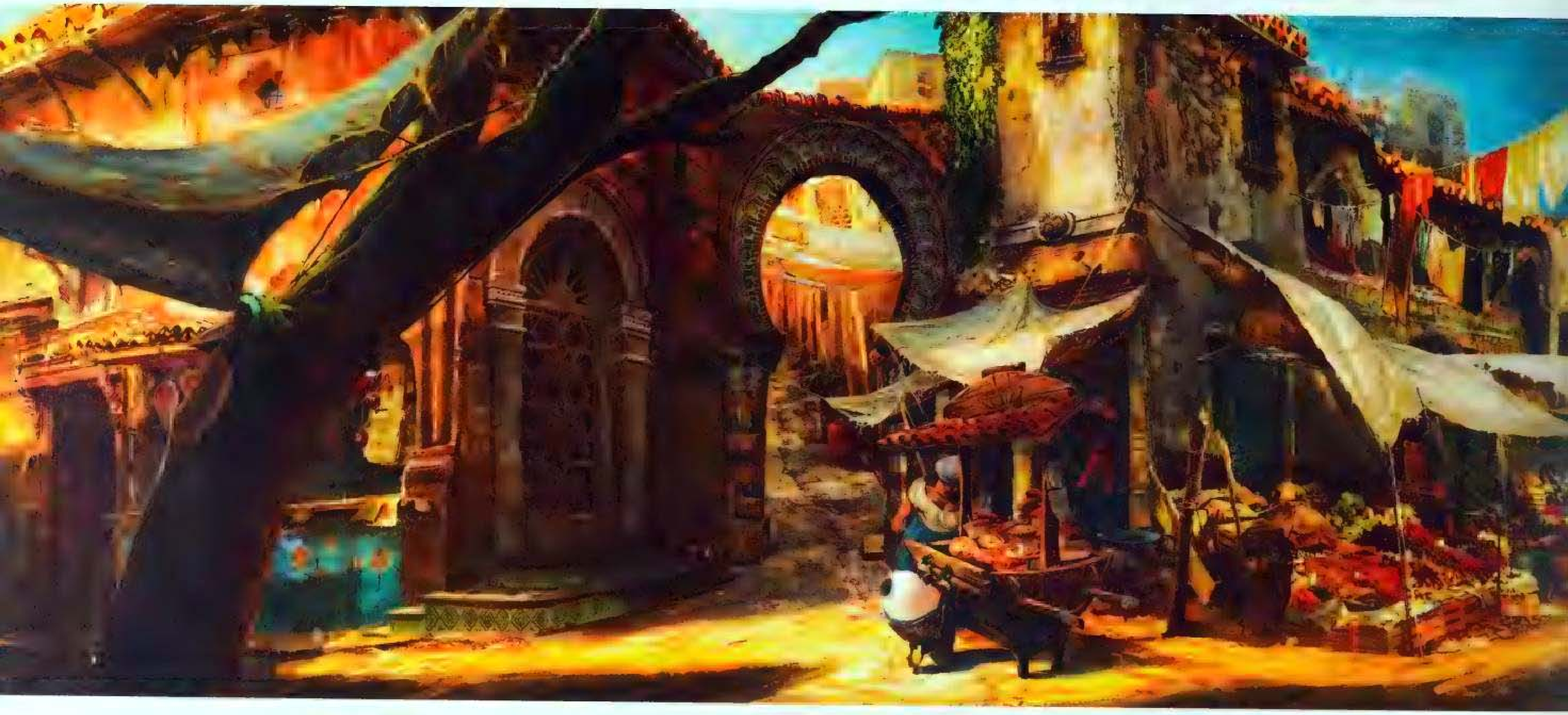
The idea of a secure medieval box that contains the magic beans came straight from the script. The green glow emanating from the box was at one time much more sophisticated, but this approach fought against the crude simplicity of the device. For the beans themselves, the artists decided to play with the color of the beans as a way of indicating their magic powers, rather than using elaborate visual effects. These beans are a pure shade of cyan—a color seen again in the center of the tornado that gets stirred up when they are planted later in the movie. Because this color is rarely seen in nature, it enforces the supernatural aura of the beans. The magical power of these beans and their glow intensify when they are exposed to danger or excitement.

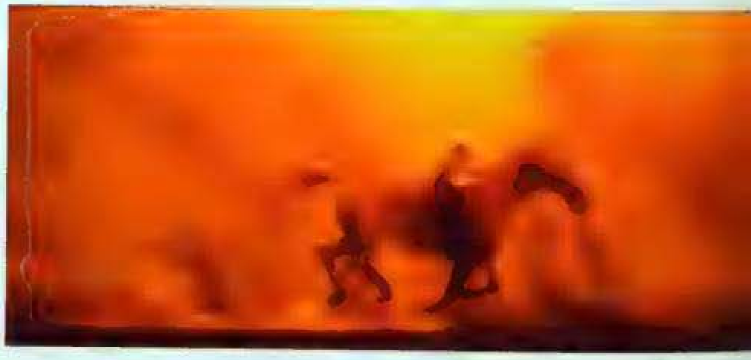
Top | Jill Shaves Jack's Beard | Nathan Fowkes | digital
Above | Jack's Bean Box and Bean Box Lock | Todd Gibbs | digital
Right | A Magic Bean | Todd Gibbs | digital
Opposite, top | Confrontation in Front of the Orphanage | Todd Gibbs | digital
Opposite, bottom | Crossing the Canyon Pass | Guillaume Aretos | digital

GETTING TECHNICAL

DUST PARTICLES

One of the best stereographic 3D effects in a CG-animated movie may also be one of the simplest. Perhaps nothing creates an illusion of depth and atmosphere better than floating particles of dust in the air—affectionately known as CIA, or "crap in the air," by the art and VFX teams. The effects unit used fluid-simulation software to create sets of these particles and handed them to the lighting department. "Canned effects can be reused as long as characters don't specifically react to them, in which case they have to be custom created," says visual effects supervisor Ken Bielenberg.





San Ricardo

In stark contrast to the rough world of the Southern Town, San Ricardo is a charming village. It's dear to Puss's heart because he grew up there in Imelda's orphanage. In earlier versions, it was a run-down town from which Puss and Humpty wanted to escape so they could seek their fortunes in the big city. After the story was revised, it was decided that this would be the place to which our hero would need to return to take care of unfinished business. So the designers and artists were asked to go back and beautify their original decrepit designs.

The design team looked closely at the architecture of Spanish medieval villages to come up with the final look for San Ricardo. However, the main source of inspiration for the town's design was Puss himself. As production designer Guillaume Aretos explains, the key adjectives that describe the film's main character—twisted, colorful, bold, romantic, and shadowy—were also used to build San Ricardo.

To finalize San Ricardo's look, artist Paul Westacott brought back pictures and notebooks filled with drawings from a trip to San Miguel de Allende, a beautiful town in central Mexico. "We launched a beautification pass, just like a mayor would do to attract visitors," says art director Christian Schellewald. "We cleaned up the place; painted the buildings in different colors; and added ivy, bougainvilleas, and potted plants everywhere." The village, perched high on a mountaintop, has a unique, almost celestial feeling. It was important for the artists to demonstrate the isolated nature of this location. "We wanted to create this feeling that this village was either the end of the road or the beginning," explains Aretos. "In either case, it's not a village that you would normally go through!"

Opposite, top | The Pie Heist | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, middle | San Ricardo Main Square Panorama | Peter Zaslav | digital
Below, from far left, first four | Sequence 2000 – "Sequence 2000" only | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Below, second from right | In the Sandstorm | Todd Gibbs | digital
Below, far right | Puss Returns to the San Ricardo Bridge | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Top | San Ricardo Building Exploration | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

This page | Flashback Lighting Treatment | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, top | The Bean Heist | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, bottom | Humpty Is Released from Jail | Dominique Louis | digital

THE ORPHANAGE

In one of the earlier drafts of the story, the Giant had destroyed the orphanage and replaced it with his shoe. That's why the orphanage somewhat resembles a giant boot in its final incarnation. The artists also retained this appearance because they wanted to echo the nursery rhyme "There Was an Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe."

In the final script, the backstory is that Imelda turned the town's centrally located church into an orphanage. So the building has a bell tower, stained-glass windows, and a dining room that could have easily been a congregational seating area. The bell tower serves as a convenient hideout for Puss and Humpty during their Bean Club days. The orphanage seems to be the focal point of the town square and appears to be in harmony with the rest of the bright, colorful architecture of San Ricardo.

Top | Puss Sits in the Orphanage Bedroom | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Above | Orphanage Dining Hall Entrance Surfacing | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Opposite, top | Puss Is Introduced to the Orphanage | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Opposite, bottom | Imelda Introduces Puss to the Orphans | Dominique Louis | digital

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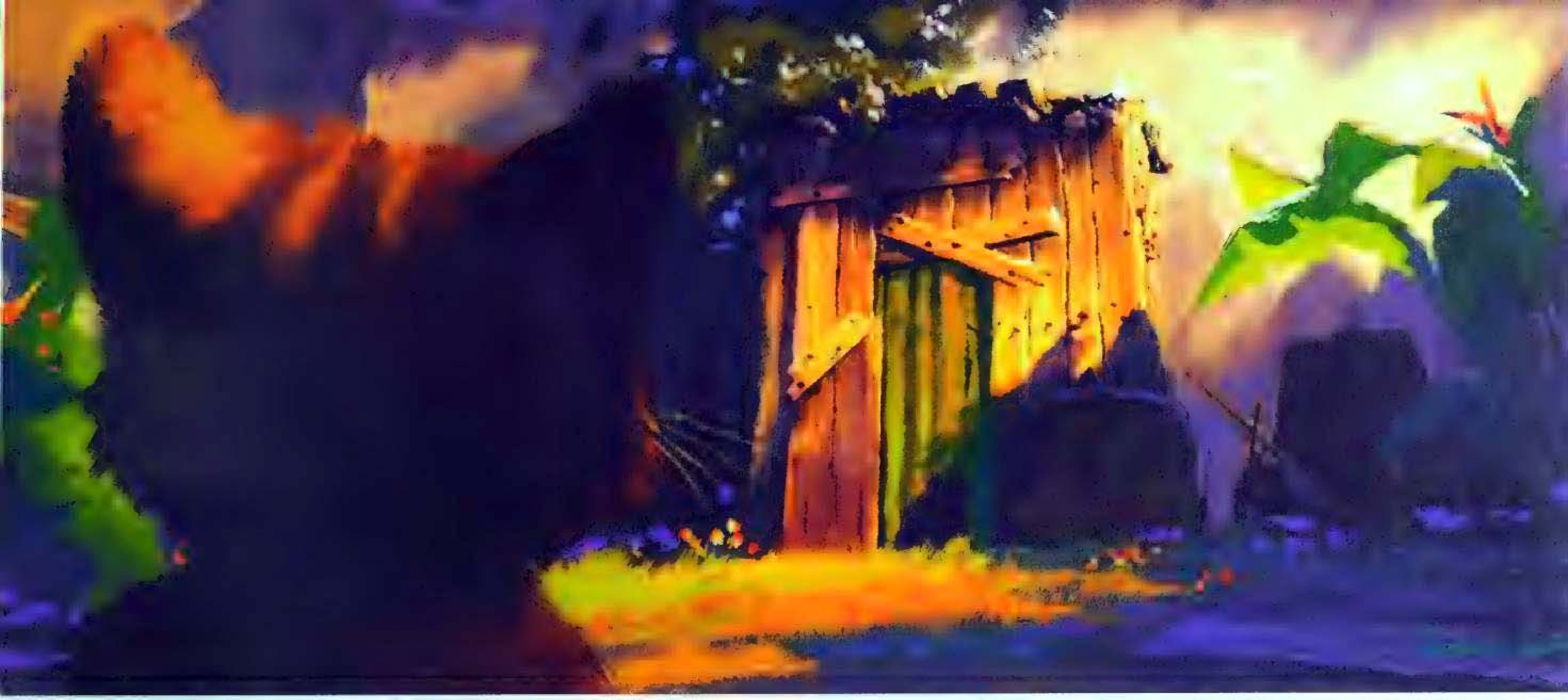
THE BEAN SHACK

Art director Christian Schellewald traveled to the Spanish island of Majorca one summer to capture images for the movie's texture library—a collection of real-life and art-inspired sources for the artists to draw from when designing the backdrops for Puss's adventures. There he discovered a rundown shack where someone had stored an assortment of yard equipment. He felt that the Bean Shack would be a similar place—a storage place made out of stone and wood, less maintained and more improvised. A tucked-away shack like this would be the perfect spot to which Humpty could escape every day to plan the details of his eventual departure.

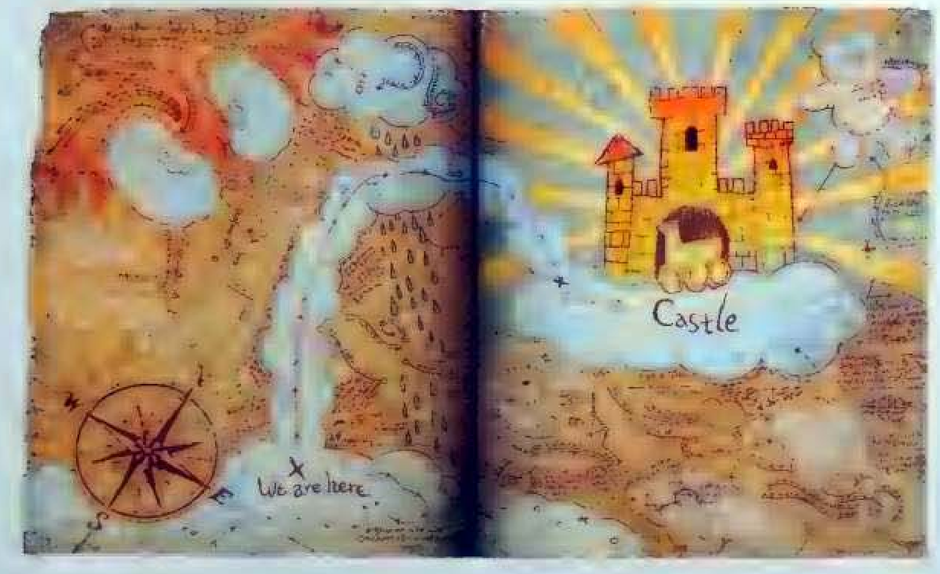
Top | Humpty Bean Shack Sketch | Woonyoung Jung | pencil and digital
Above | Humpty Shack | Stan Seo | digital model
Opposite, top | Puss Follows Humpty to the Bean Shack | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Lots of Beans Sprouting | Dominique Louis | digital



HUMPTY'S MACHINES

The little egg man designed a flying wagon in the movie, but it was up to the DreamWorks Animation team to make sure the actual invention would be grounded in reality. The team relied on the talents of modeler Facundo Rabaudi to make sure the details of Humpty's many inventions were correct: In one instance, a machine's pulley system, which waters Humpty's collection of beans, need to be somewhat functional; ideally, the mechanics would be accurate and applicable in the real world.

Top left | Humpty Prepares to Fly | Dominique Louis | digital
Above | Humpty Wagon with Wings Open | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Below | Bean Irrigation System Surfacing | Woonyoung Jung | digital



HUMPTY'S DRAWINGS AND JOURNAL

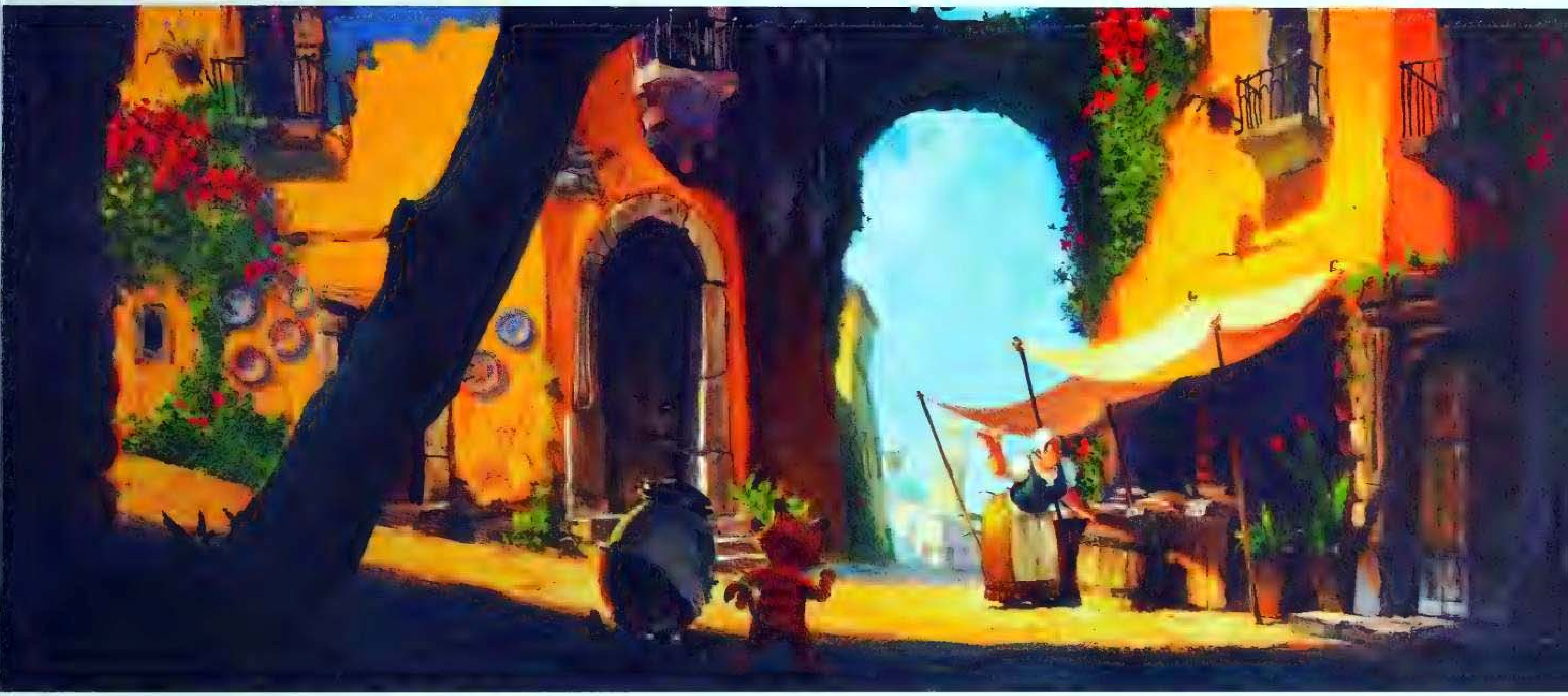
It's established early on that Humpty is a dreamer, but he's also a clever tinkerer and a doer. That's why he is often seen scribbling away in his notebooks and drawing diagrams for his inventions, just like a mad genius shunned by society. To get the right feel for this character's drawings, the artists blended a typical three-year-old's drawing style with a couple of the famous sketches Leonardo da Vinci made for his inventions. Both Humpty and the Renaissance master have a knack for designing elaborate flying machines.
One can learn a lot about Humpty's keen intellect and inventive mind by looking at the journal in which he chronicles his inventions and observations. The complexity of his character comes through in his diagrams, notes, and elaborate maps.

Top left | Humpty Castle Drawing | Nate Wragg | crayon
Above | Humpty Drawings | Nate Wragg | crayon
Left | Humpty Journal Page | Woonyoung Jung | digital

Storefronts

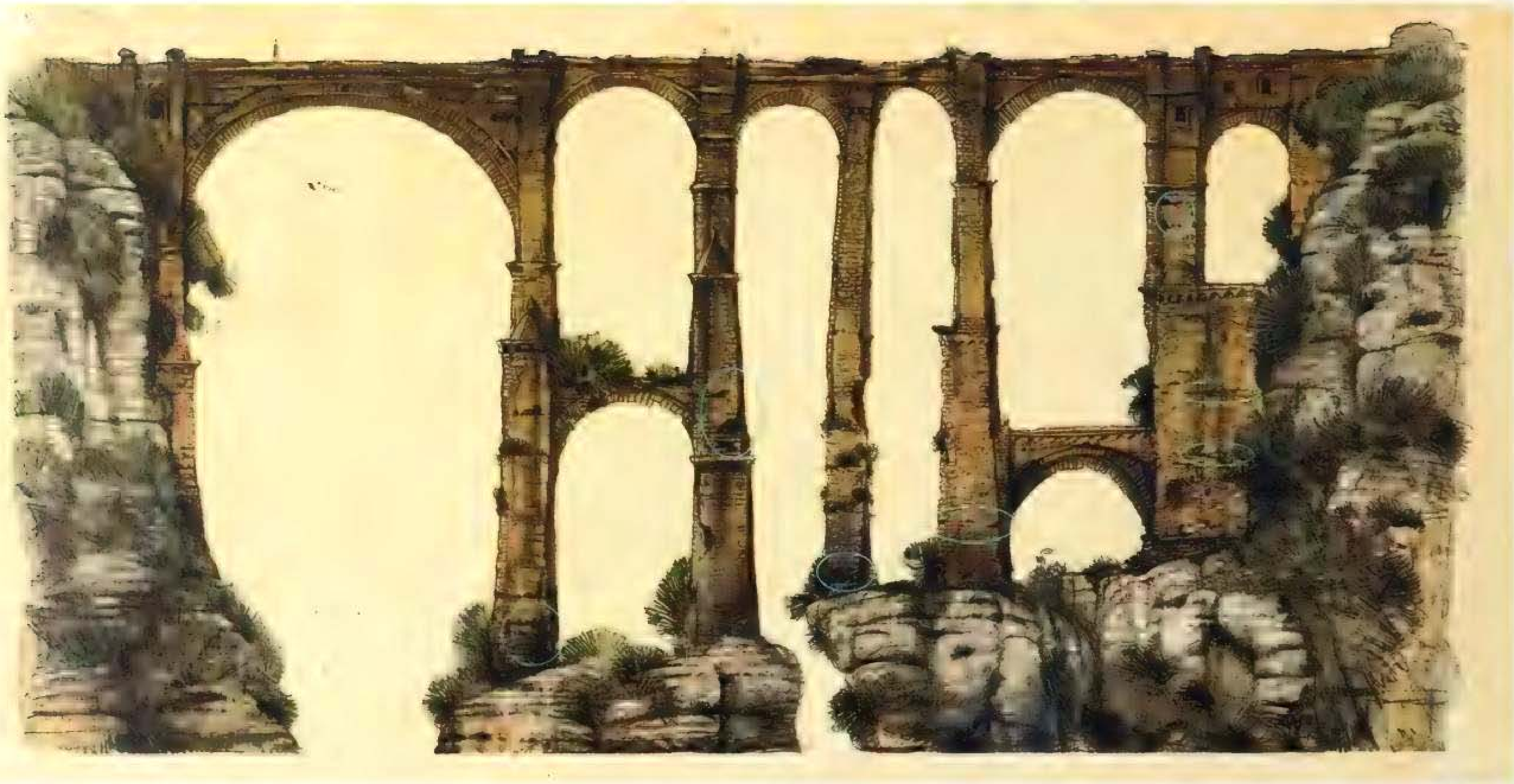
In the early versions of the script, San Ricardo was portrayed as a town that seemed too small for Puss and Humpty's grand dreams. The dull storefronts played a significant role in conveying this message. In the final film, the stores and the marketplace are simply vibrant, Latin-themed backdrops full of flowers, produce, and color.

Top | Puss Steals a Pie | Dominique Louis | digital
Above and opposite, bottom | San Ricardo Storefront Concepts | Griselda Sastrawinata | digital
Opposite, top | Getting Ready for the Pie Heist | Woongyoung Jung | digital



CAFE de BIGOTES

LA ULTIMA
PARADA
EST
1279

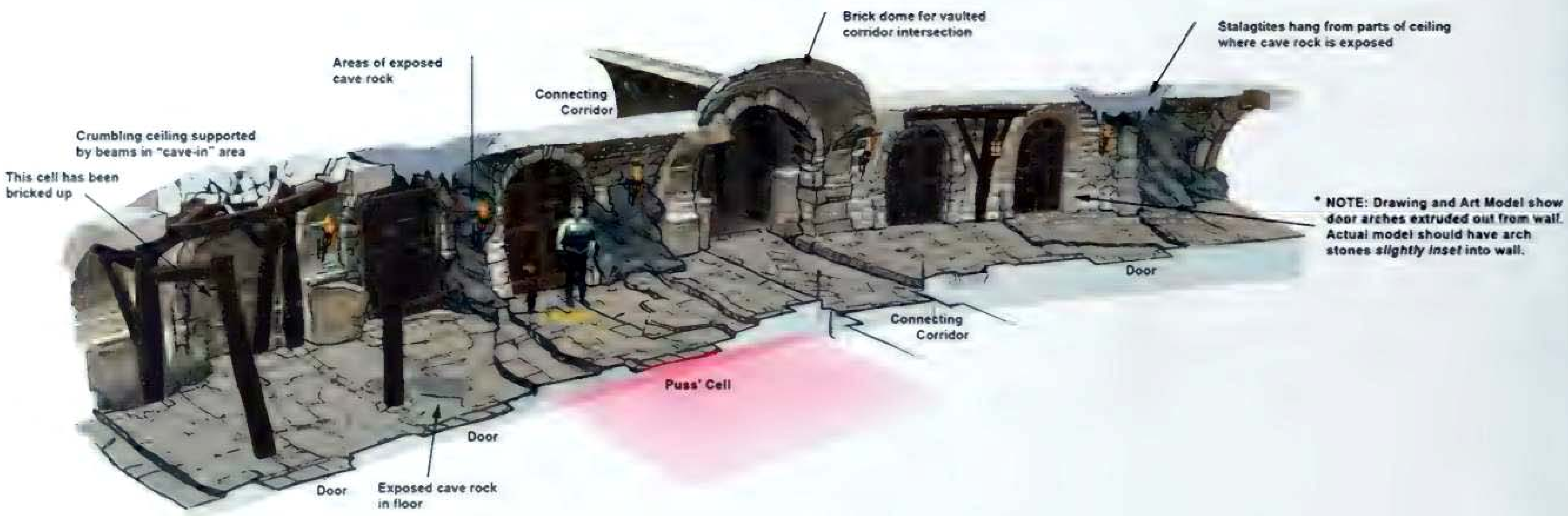


The Bridge

Described by production designer Guillaume Aretos as the story's *plat de résistance* (the main course), the bridge is loosely based on a breathtaking span in the Spanish city of Ronda, near Málaga. The only way in or out of San Ricardo, the big-screen bridge was planned from the beginning as a place for Puss to have a final standoff. The bridge makes its first appearance in the movie in Puss's first-act flashback, where we see our hero enter the town that becomes his home. It also plays a key role in the sequence where Puss leaves Humpty to be captured by the law and serves as the setting for the egg man's fatal fall in the final act.

Because the bridge is positioned over a large crevice and above a powerful river, it provides the perfect setting for an explosive visual-effects sequence in the film's final climax. The scene's white-knuckle action is intensified when viewed in stereoscopic 3D, which enhances the effect of the bridge being dramatically demolished.

Top | San Ricardo Bridge Side View | Woonyoung Jung | pencil and digital
Above | Puss Leaves Humpty on the Bridge | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, top | Humpty Arrested on the Bridge | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Opposite, bottom | Baby Puss in a Basket on the Bridge | Peter Zaslav | digital
Following pages | San Ricardo Wide Shot | Nathan Fowkes and Christian Schellewald | digital



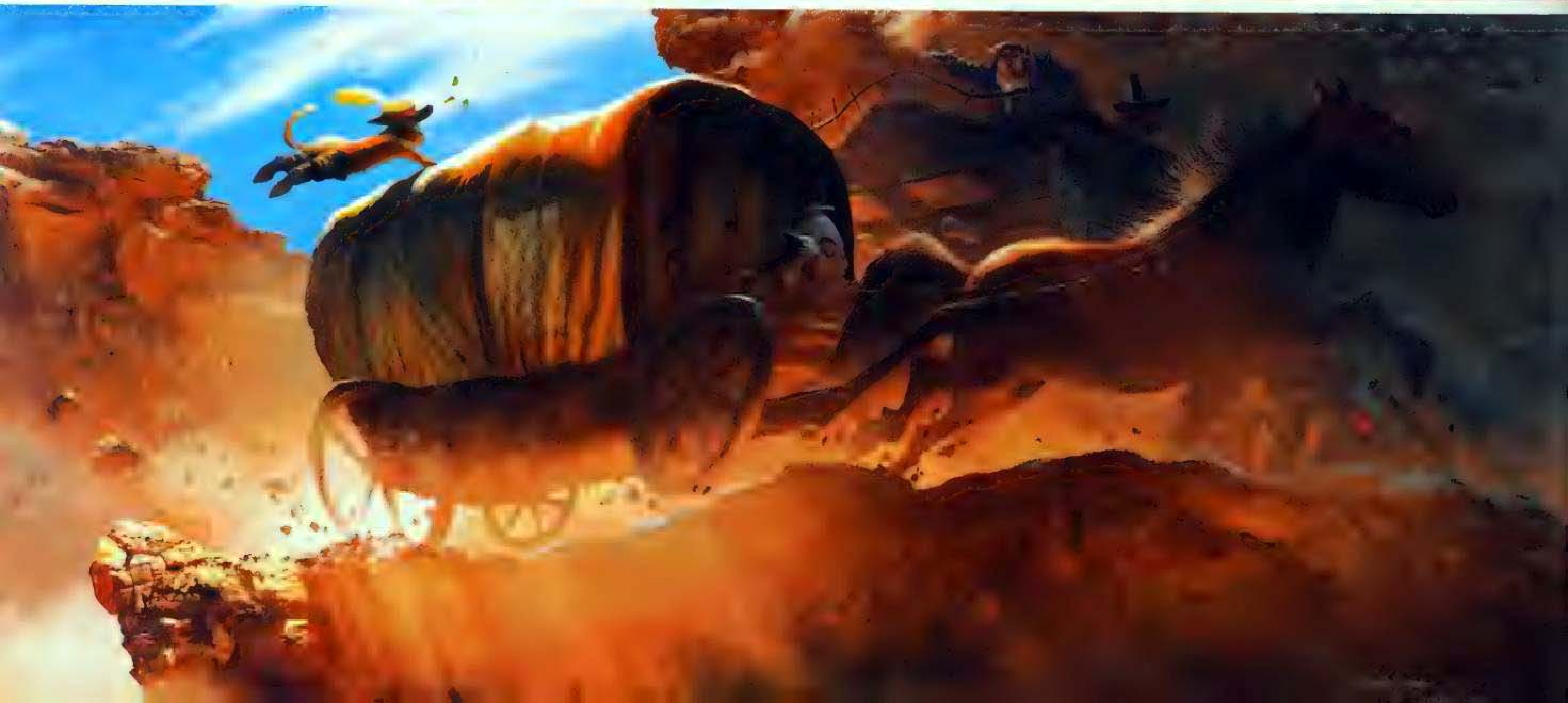
THE PRISON

For a period during the development process, San Ricardo was a mining town, so its prison was carved deep inside a giant rock. It's a dark and drab place—with the torches, lanterns, heavy doors, and heavily armed guards, one expects to see in a storybook prison. The unfortunate prisoner feels as if he's going to the bowels of the earth, after being led down a precarious staircase. One can see elements of eighteenth-century Italian artist Giovanni Piranesi's prison drawings in this oppressive structure.

"One of the pleasures of painting is playing with happy accidents. In CG, these accidents don't happen naturally because the computer is all about perfection. I loved the fact that our job was to introduce handmade aspects of art to the world of Puss."

—Guillaume Aretos, production designer

Above | Jail Corridor | Peter Zaslav and Facundo Rabaudi | digital
Opposite, top | Kitty Is Cornered on the Veranda | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, bottom | Humpty Skulks in Jail | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

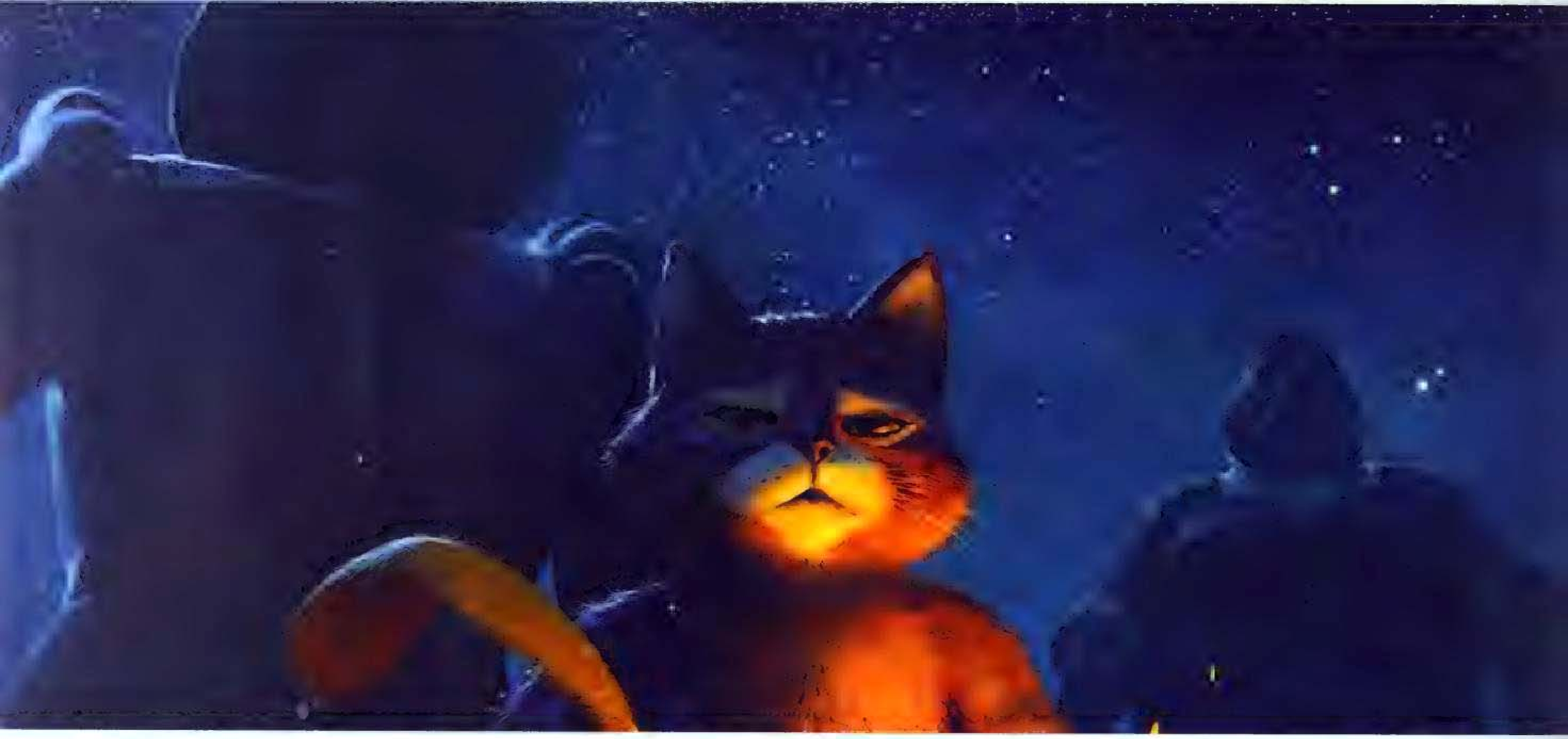


THE CANYON

One of the movie's major action sequences takes place when Puss, Humpty, and Kitty try to steal the magic beans from Jack and Jill during a stagecoach ride through a treacherous, narrow canyon. This key scene establishes the rebuilding of trust between Puss and Humpty. The fast and furious nature of this action sequence demanded numerous visual effects shots and a higher-than-usual number of cuts. The chase scene also required many dust effects, a cannon explosion, and the meticulous depiction of how the blast affected the walls of the canyon—all of which kept the visual effects team busy for months.

As producer Joe M. Aguilar recalls, "The stagecoach was designed to look and feel hard like a tank, reflecting the personalities of Jack and Jill, who are seen as the main villains at this moment in the story—before Humpty surprises everyone in the third act. However, you can still notice the influences of the classic western movie in the look of the stagecoach, regardless of the timeless nature of the story."

Opposite, top | Canyon Establishing Shot | Guillaume Aretos and Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom | Canyon Chase | Guillaume Aretos and Dominique Louis | digital
Top | Jack and Jill Stagecoach Concept | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Above | The Canyon | Kirsten Kawamura | digital



THE PLANTING GROUND

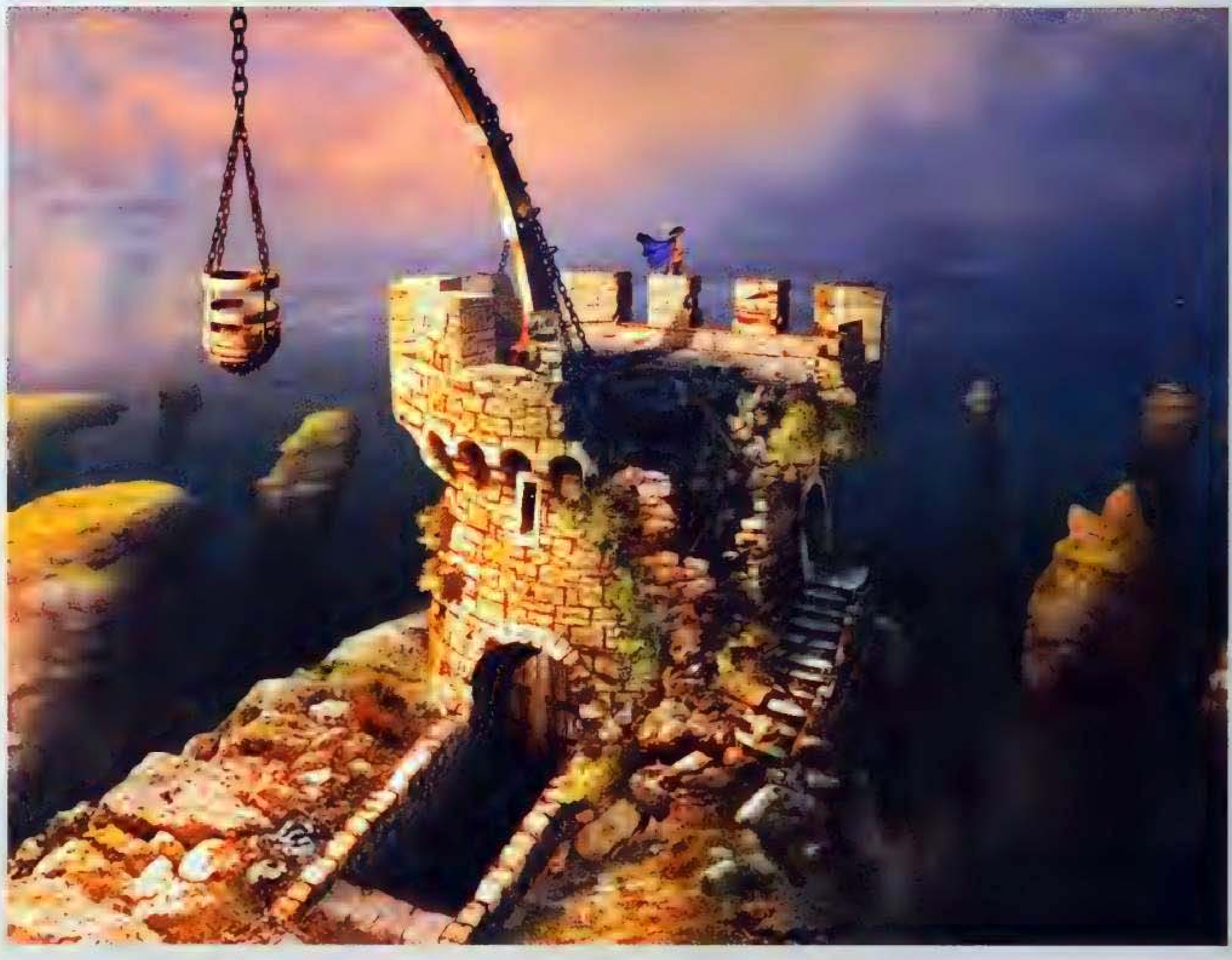
Several clues about the fate of the missing Giant appear subtly throughout the movie. Sharp-eyed observers may notice that the arch Humpty's carriage passes through in the desert sequence is made of huge petrified bones. The backstory is that they belonged to the Giant, who, at some point, was pushed off the Cloud World by the angry Mama Goose.

Opposite, top | Lights Out for Fuss | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Opposite, bottom | Establishing Shot of the Planting Ground | Dominique Louis | digital
Above | Sequence 1300 – High Times Lighting Key | Dominique Louis | digital
Right | Traveling to the Planting Ground | Kirsten Kawamura | digital

OUT OF PICTURE

THE TOWER AND THE SURREAL LANDSCAPE

In an earlier version of the story, Puss, Humpty, and Kitty would travel to a watchtower, where they entered a labyrinth that led them to the planting ground. Eventually they would come across a peculiarly shaped canyon—which is actually an impression of where the Giant landed when he fell to the earth. To set the stage for their journey above the clouds, the sky and the landscape took on eerie colors. Eventually, it was decided that Humpty would simply calculate the exact location of the secret spot as Puss and Kitty share a tender moment together in the carriage.



Opposite top | Traveling Past the Giant's Bones | Guillaume Aretos | digital
Opposite bottom | Desert Outpost Concept | Pierre Olivier Vincent | digital
Top | Desert Crater Foothold View | Pierre Olivier Vincent | digital
Middle left | Giant Imprint Planting Ground Model Render | Facundo Rabaud | digital
Bottom left | Planting Site Model Render | Facundo Rabaud | digital
Above | Beat Area | Pierre Olivier Vincent | digital

THE BEANSTALK

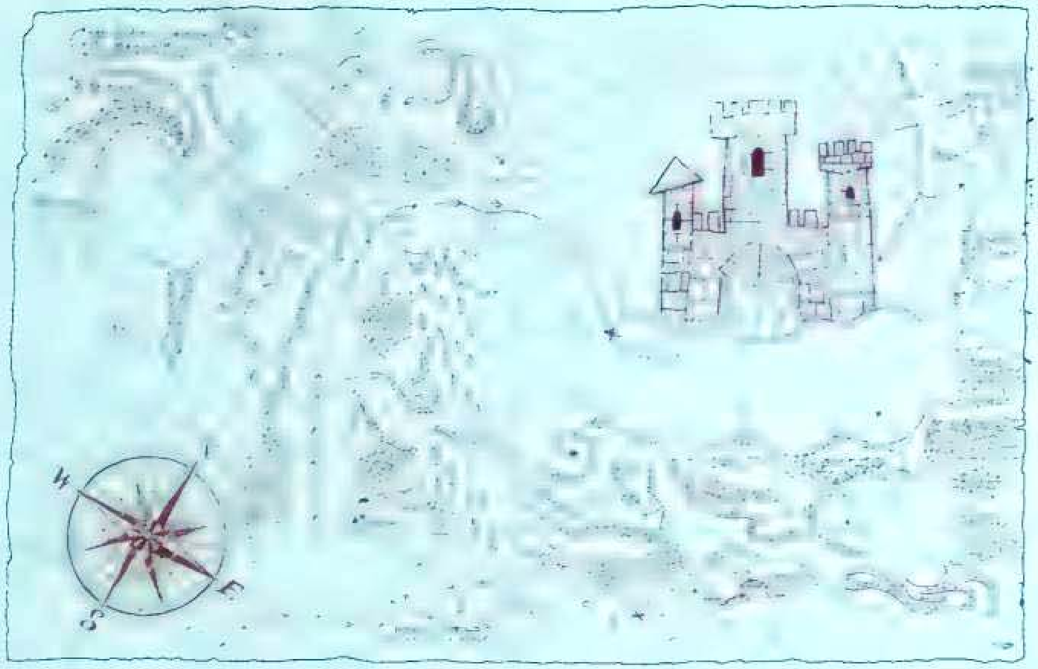
To get to the Cloud World and The Golden Goose, Puss, Humpty, and Kitty have to climb the fast-growing beanstalk of fairy-tale fame. To create this part of the movie, the designers were influenced by the European art nouveau movement, popularized at the turn of the twentieth century. The plant-inspired motifs, the curvilinear forms, and organic, free-flowing essence of the art is clearly visible in the design of the powerful, towering beanstalk, which grows instantaneously and takes on a life of its own as our characters climb it to reach the Cloud World.

"When we were assembling the art crew, we looked at artists whose portfolios reflected specific artistic choices and styles. We were very lucky to have a group of very talented artists who all wanted to push everything to a higher level."

—Christian Schellewald, art director

Above | Broken Beanstalk | Kirsten Kawamura | digital
Right (inside gatefold) | Up the Beanstalk | Dominique Louis | digital

Above left | Early Beanstalk | Nathan Fowkes | digita
Middle left | Sequence 1300 Lighting Key | Dominique Louis | digita
Bottom left | Up the Beanstalk | Emil Mitev | digita
Above | FX Tornado | Can Yuksel | digita
Following pages | The Beanstalk Shoots Up | Richard Daskas, Dominique Louis, and Christian Schellewald | digita



THE CLOUD WORLD

As Puss, Kitty, and Humpty climb the beanstalk, they enter a magical realm that is enveloped by clouds, through which they must pass to reach the Giant's Castle. Initially, the team of artists working on this sequence decided to let their imagination run wild, elaborating a wide variety of cloud shapes. Development artists Nate Wragg, Peter Zaslav, and Ronald A. Kurniawan came up with some amazing cloud formations that resembled lava lamps, animals, dragons, and other whimsical creatures. While these images were wonderful points of reference, they were dropped because they tended to interfere with the story and the interaction between the three characters.

Of all the various structures initially designed, the only ones to make the final cut were the formations shaped like trees. They were dreamlike and ethereal enough to bring a magical quality to the scene without being too obvious and distracting.

As the characters climb the growing beanstalk, they experience various atmospheric and weather changes, such as bright sunshine, storm showers, and even the aurora borealis. "Once they poke through the clouds, it feels as if they are on top of the world," says art director Christian Schellewald. "The idea is that they seem to be even above the sun. It's a happy, comforting environment, and there's nothing threatening about it. We get a general feeling of softness and beauty before they sense the dangers that lurk ahead in the Castle."

"We created over a thousand concept pieces for this movie because when you are animating fantastic environments, such as the Cloud World, the Cat Cantina, and the Giant's Castle, you need to go through a lot of artwork to obtain just the right tone."

—Christian Schellewald, art director

Opposite, top | Cloud Trees and Waterfalls | Peter Zaslav | digital
Opposite, bottom | Cloud Explorations | Nate Wragg | digital
Above | Humpty's Journal Map of the Cloud World | Woonyoung Jung | pencil
Previous pages | Into the Cloud World | Dominique Louis | digital

PLANTING BEANS AND BUILDING CLOUDS

The Cloud World scenes presented the visual effects team with two of their biggest challenges: creating a giant beanstalk that blasts from the soil and grows at an unimaginable rate, and developing CG-animated volumetric clouds that resemble familiar objects and move effortlessly.

When you are animating a fantastic, growing beanstalk that bursts through the ground, you have to make sure your VFX team can handle all the sprouting leaves, the twirling vines, and the out-of-control trunk that's speeding toward the heavens. "The effects team had to develop new techniques to procedurally grow this plant," says VFX supervisor Ken Bielenberg. "New leaves are born every second, and their textures are different than the older, darker ones. At the same time, the trunklike structure is rocketing through the CG clouds."

This scene provided the stereoscopic 3D technicians with the chance to shine by delivering an immersive experience. Plenty of perspective is provided as the beanstalk moves through the cloud formations and Puss, Humpty, and Kitty go through a rain downpour, the northern lights, and a snowstorm before they reach the top. That's when the cloud builders had to pull out their finest instruments.

"In the past, clouds proved to be too expensive and too difficult for a production," notes Bielenberg. "But for this movie, we've had great development in volumetric clouds. Working with the R&D [research & development] team, we were able to make beautiful clouds that could also move and form different objects in the surreal landscape. For example, it's now possible for us to create cloud trees that move in the wind and dissipate in a realistic manner."

Realistic CG clouds require complex lighting schemes in which artists backlight the formations to get the silver-lining effect we see in the natural world. "When light enters a cloud, it ends up bouncing around a lot because of the cloud's makeup," explains Bielenberg. "This effect is called multiscattering. We had to develop a proprietary software that copies the same multiscattering effect."

Another crucial task was determining how the characters would look and interact with the clouds as they walked through this strange world. The clouds needed to be strong enough to support them, but they had to feel different from regular, solid ground. The effects department spent hours observing buckets of dry ice and steam at the studio to come up with ways to making the clouds feel more spongy or trampoline-like as the characters walk through this misty particle world.

Opposite, top | Beanstalk Death Progression | Woongyuung Jung | digital
Opposite, bottom | Practical Model Beanstalk | Facundo Rabaudi | digital
Top | The Cloud Tornado Strikes the Planting Site | Dominique Louis | digital
Above left | Beanstalk Shape Design | Christian Schellewald | digital
Above | Arriving at the Cloud World | Peter Zaslav | digital

THE CASTLE

Original designs for the Castle were extremely complicated to execute in a CG environment, and story changes removed the Giant from the equation, implying he had abandoned his home a long time ago. Therefore, the creative team had to come up with ways to simplify various details of the structure and update it to reflect the revised story line.

One of the Castle's highlights is a self-contained weather system that includes waterfalls pouring out of gargoyle mouths to generate the clouds that keep the Castle hovering in the air.

Looking to the interior of the Castle, the designers had to keep in mind that this lavish palace has been abandoned for years, perhaps decades. Throughout, they strategically placed a number of articles left behind by the Giant, including his traps, some overturned furniture, dishes, and long-forgotten books. If you look closely, you can find references to the Giant in some of the abandoned objects in the Castle, specifically in a large tapestry that depicts him fighting with other giant-size mythical monsters.

Additionally, as a testament to the passage of time, the Giant's once well-tended Zen garden, featured in the Castle's interior, has now become a jungle overrun by plants and trees. The Golden Goose's botanical playground is surrounded by an enormous moat that, to Puss, Kitty, and Humpty, seems impossible to cross. However, a popped Champagne-bottle cork catapults them over the chasm and closer to the object of their dreams.

Opposite, top | The Golden Goose's Shrine Room | Todd Gibbs and Guillaume Aretos | digital
Opposite, bottom | Reveal of the Giant's Castle | Dominique Louis | digital
Top | Early Castle Concept | Christian Schellewald | pencil and digital
Above left | Giant's Castle Establishing Shot | Guillaume Aretos | digital
Above right | Work-in-Progress Castle Render | Stan Seo | digital

THE GIANT'S TRAPS

The Giant's machines and complex traps for catching intruders were all, like Humpty's machines, designed to be mechanically correct. It's interesting to note that Humpty and the Giant are linked by this special knack for invention, just as it is revealed in the movie's climax that they are connected through Mama Goose and the world of the Castle.

Opposite, top | Giant's Safe Room Concept | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom | The Golden Goose Nest | Richard Daskas | digital
Top | Fighting the Giant's Machines | Pierre Olivier Vincent | digital
Above | The Giant's Machines | Pierre Olivier Vincent | digital
Following pages | The Jungle | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital

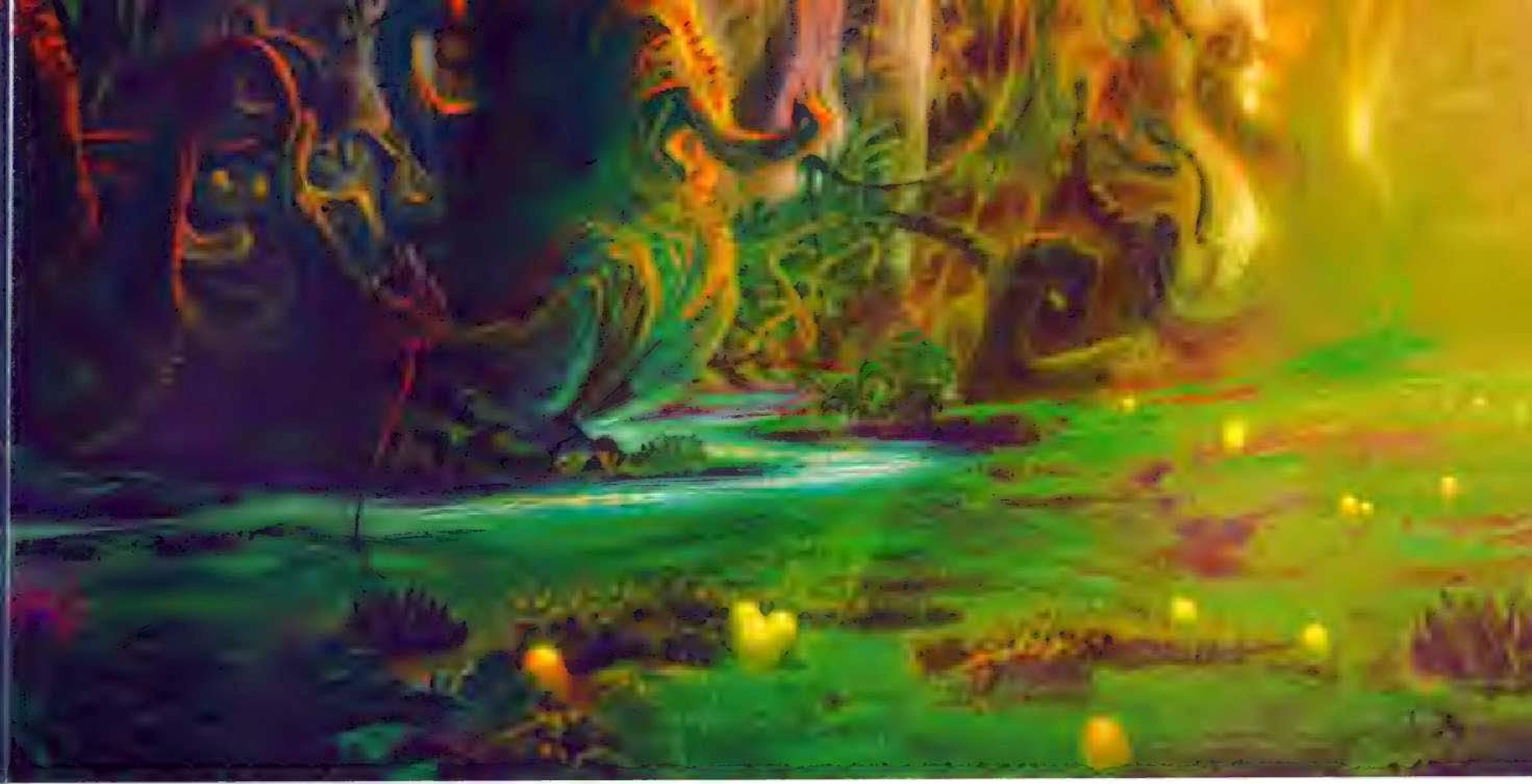
OUT OF PICTURE

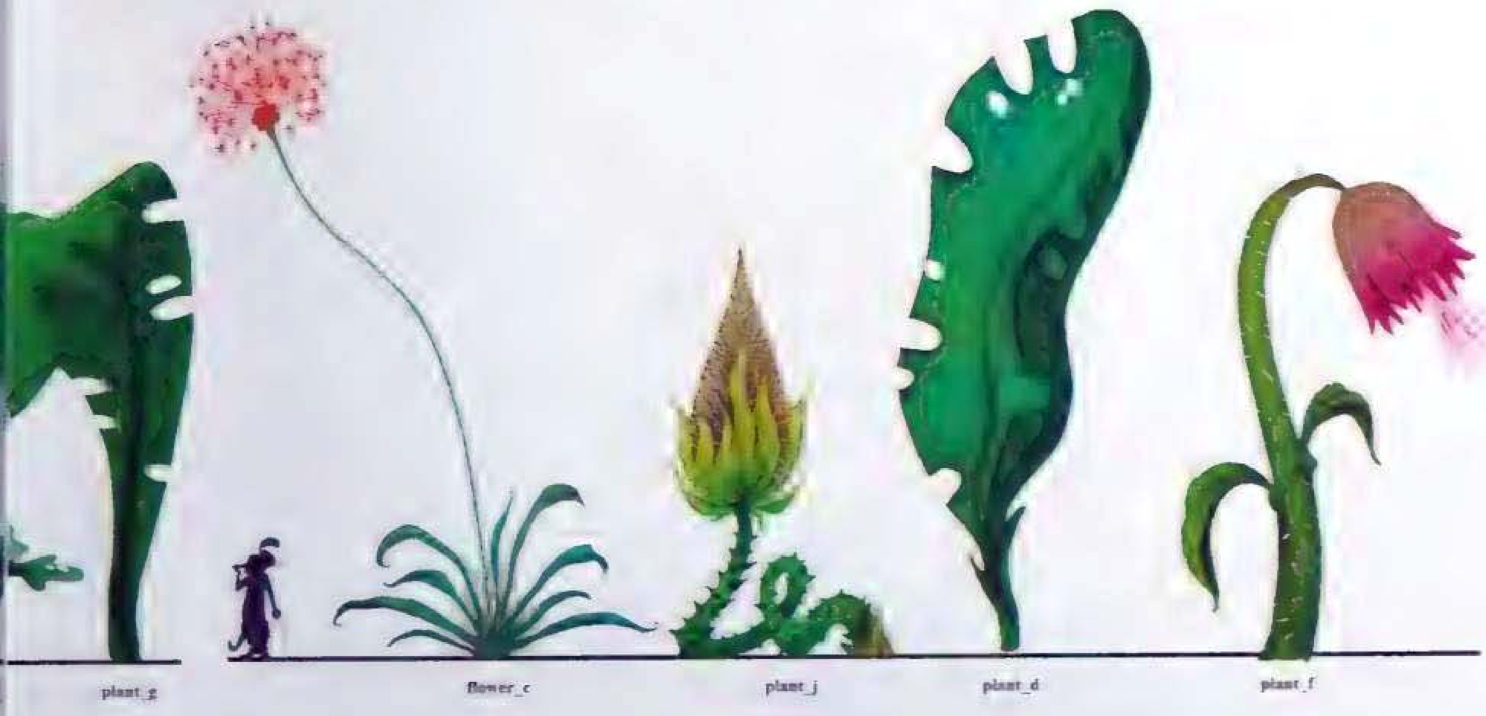
THE GOOSE ROTUNDA

Wanting to find a way to depict how much the Giant cherished The Golden Goose, the artists played with the ideas of a golden room and pedestals. Eventually, when it was decided that the Castle would be deserted, the artists designed a round room with a special area of interest—a pergola that would lead the eyes straight to the treasure. Antoni Gaudí's designs were used again, this time as a starting point to create the more ornate columns, which display beanstalk and egg motifs. The elegant details also take a page from the Vatican's famous St. Peter's Basilica. This rotunda can be viewed as a sacred place built by the Giant for his favorite pet.

Top | Golden Goose Shrine Concept | Griselda Sastrawinata | digital
Above | Golden Goose Shrine Concepts | Kirsten Kawamura | digital

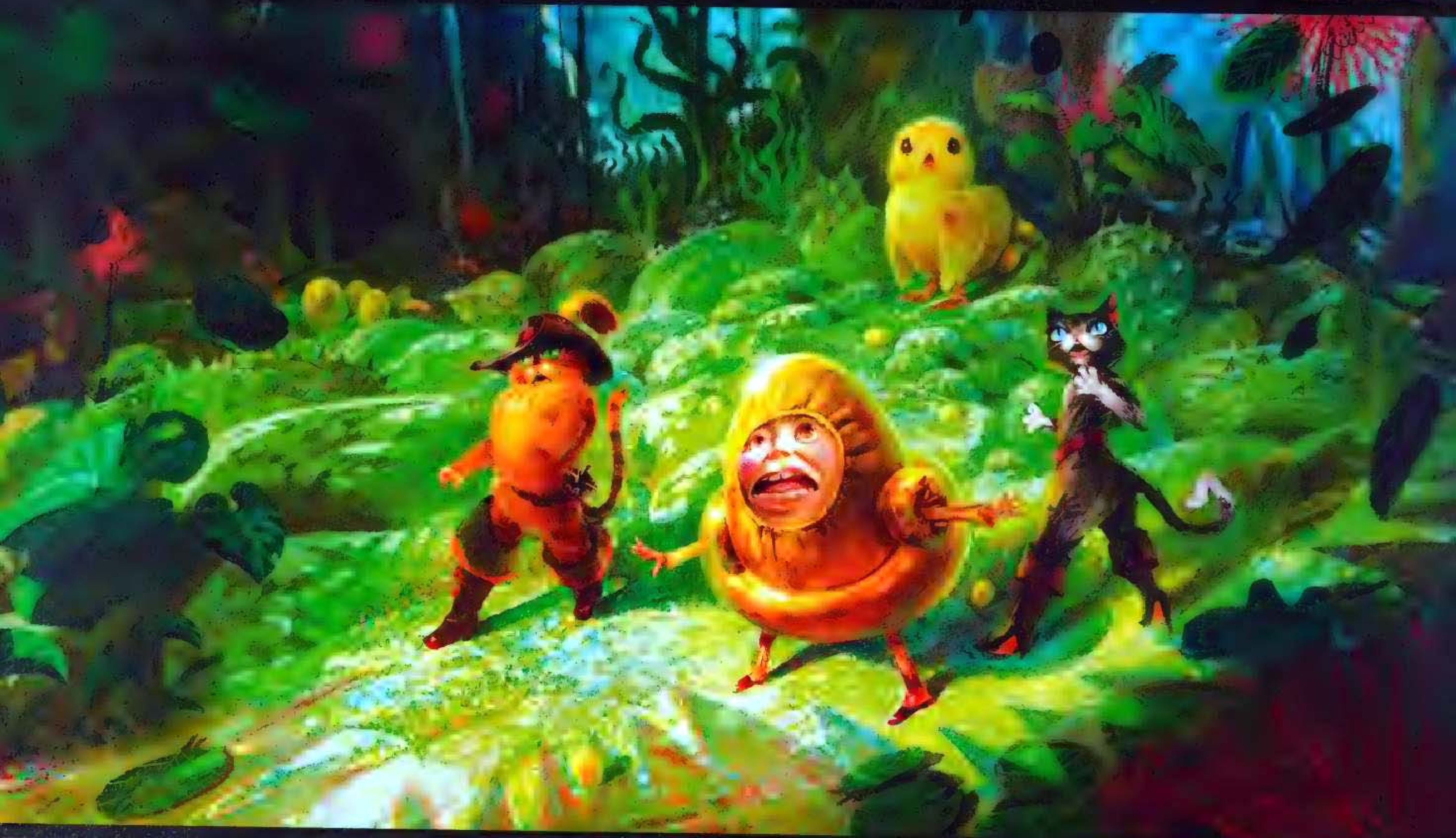
Top | The Golden Goose Pond | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Above | Jungle Foliage Lineup | Nate Wragg | digital





PLANTS AND VEGETATION

Artist Ronald A. Kurniawan's surreal paintings played an important role in determining how the wild and untamed jungle should look when rendered in CG. It wasn't enough to simply depict humongous leaves and stems or to represent an existing jungle: The foliage had to feel abandoned, otherworldly, and whimsical at the same time. The plants had to be larger in scale and had to feel bizarre, just like everything else in the Cloud World. This used to be a well-kept garden that reflected the Giant's love for and attachment to the Goose. Since his death, however, the plants have taken over, and the garden has become uncontrollable.



Opposite, top | Something Is Coming | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, bottom left | Hiding Out | Woongyoung Jung | digital
Opposite, bottom right | Seeing the Rotunda | Woongyoung Jung | digital
Top left | In the Jungle | Peter Zaslav | digital
Left | Running from The Great Terror | Peter Zaslav | digital
Below | Looking Down | Woongyoung Jung | digital

NEW GROWTH IN VFX

The writers and artists had imagined that the Giant had left behind a surreal, abandoned jungle in his Castle, but it was up to the gifted VFX artists to realize this complicated vision in the CG environment of the finished film. "There are dozens of plant designs," says veteran visual effects supervisor Ken Bielenberg, who worked on all the Shrek movies. "It created huge amounts of data that needed to be rendered and moved. The amount of render power it required made my jaw drop!"

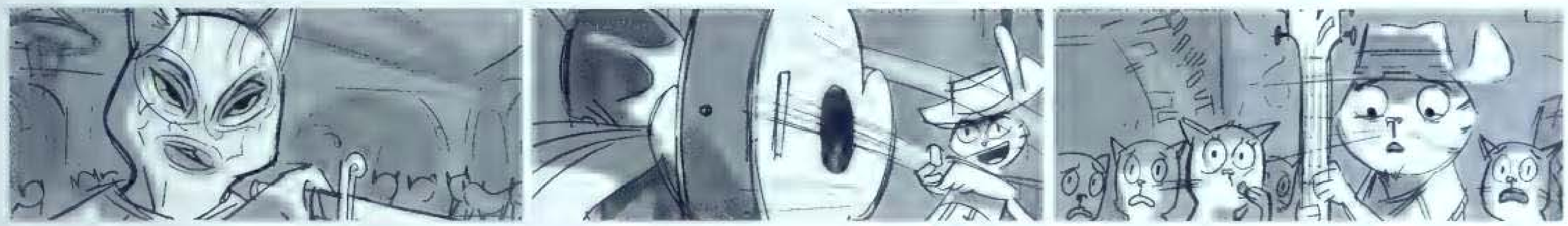
Add to this complex equation the fact that underneath the jungle, there's a moat with a river, which required challenging water shots. The characters jump into this river and interact with the water and get stuck in a whirlpool that drags them in and propels them underneath the Castle. "Water is one of the major effects types that we have done a lot before," adds Bielenberg. "But every time you tackle it, it provides unique challenges. Just because you've done water before doesn't mean you can check it off the list and say it is solved!"

The VFX team uses a wide range of DreamWorks Animation's proprietary tools, as well as reliable software programs such as Maya and Houdini, to produce these complex shots. "The scope of the effects that we are creating is growing," says Bielenberg. "In the past, we had to go back to the director and find ways to manage the story within the range of effects that we could pull off. But today, the doors have been opened, and we're not pulling back!"

Top, right and left | Jungle Moat Root Designs | Woonyoung Jung | digital
Right | At the Bottom of the Moat | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, top | Down Shot of the Moat | Peter Zaslav | digital

CHAPTER 3

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER



Sequence 500:
Building the Cat Cantina

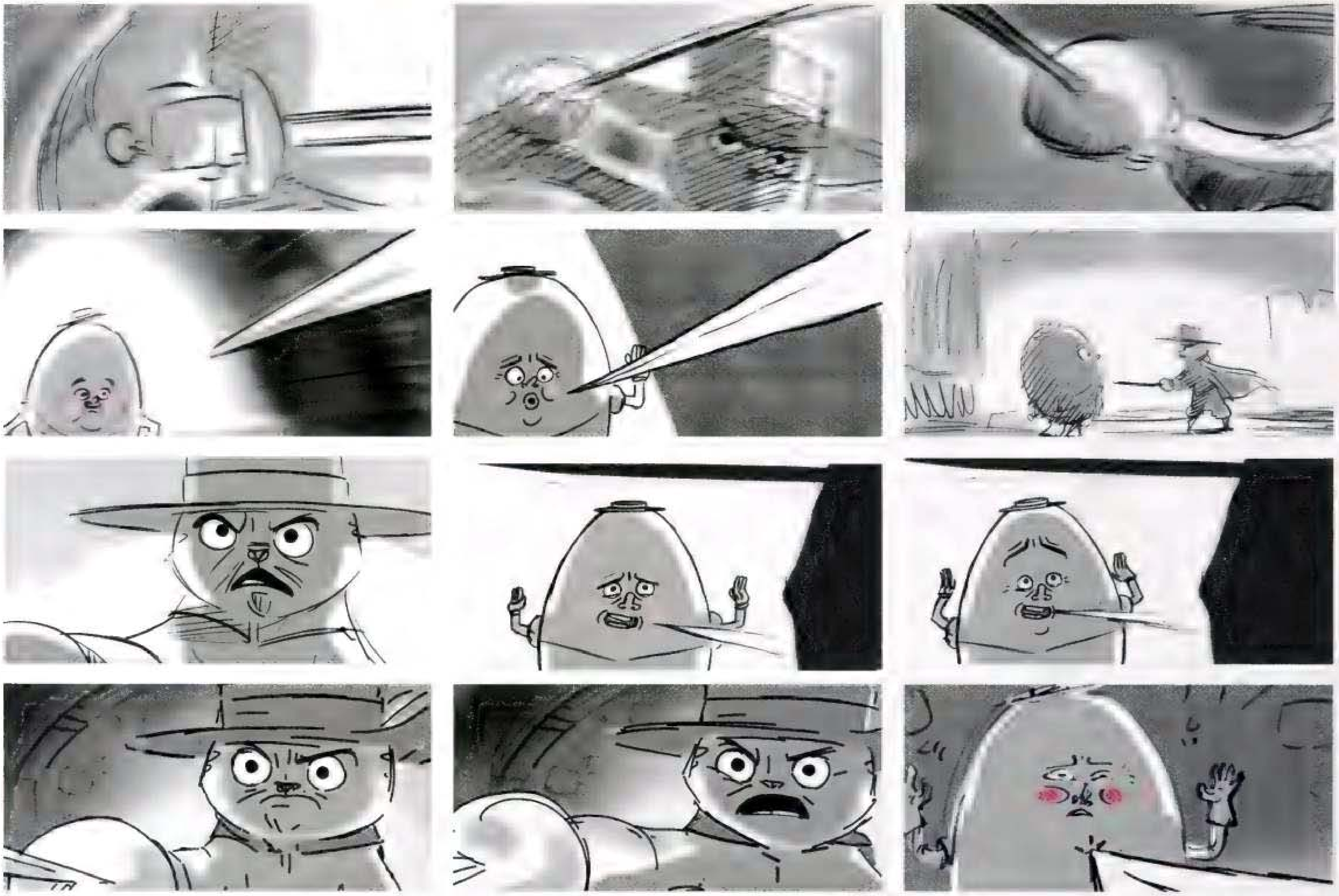
There's a pivotal scene in every great animated movie that whisks away audiences to a place that can exist only in the imagination. One such scene in *Puss In Boots* takes place early in the movie when Puss finds himself in a strange watering hole known as the Cat Cantina. This is where our hero comes face-to-face with a masked stranger who is soon revealed to be Kitty Softpaws. After being challenged to a dance-off, Puss responds, "Very well. If it is to be a dance fight, then I will Tuesday-night-dance-fight you to the death!"

Story

Head of story Robert Persichetti Jr. remembers that the team was very excited about this particular scene from day one. "This idea of a milk den/speakeasy/cat bordello/whatever you want to call is quite wonderful," he says. "It's just easy to imagine that cats sneak away at night to gather, maybe even dance. We always knew we wanted Puss to dance. A flamenco-style dance seemed obvious. The posturing, the attitude, the ego—all are very much in character for Puss."

Music certainly plays a crucial role in this sequence, as the cats prove their prowess through dance. A Mexican-like acoustic guitar song provides the fiery and distinctive background music to the felines' face-off. Reference footage from two professional flamenco dancers was used to help the animators deliver authentic

Previous pages | Cat Cantina Matador Concept | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital
Opposite, top | Cat Cantina Concept | Marcos Mateu-Mestre | digital
Opposite, bottom | Cat Cantina Early Concept | Paul Lasaine and Marcos Mateu-Mestre | digital
Top | Sequence 500 - Cat Cantina Storyboards | Bob Logan | digital
Above | Sequence 500 - Cat Cantina | Lighting by Shanna Lim | digital



movements for the characters. The dance number required an unusually high number of shots, all of which involved precise choreography for Puss and Kitty.

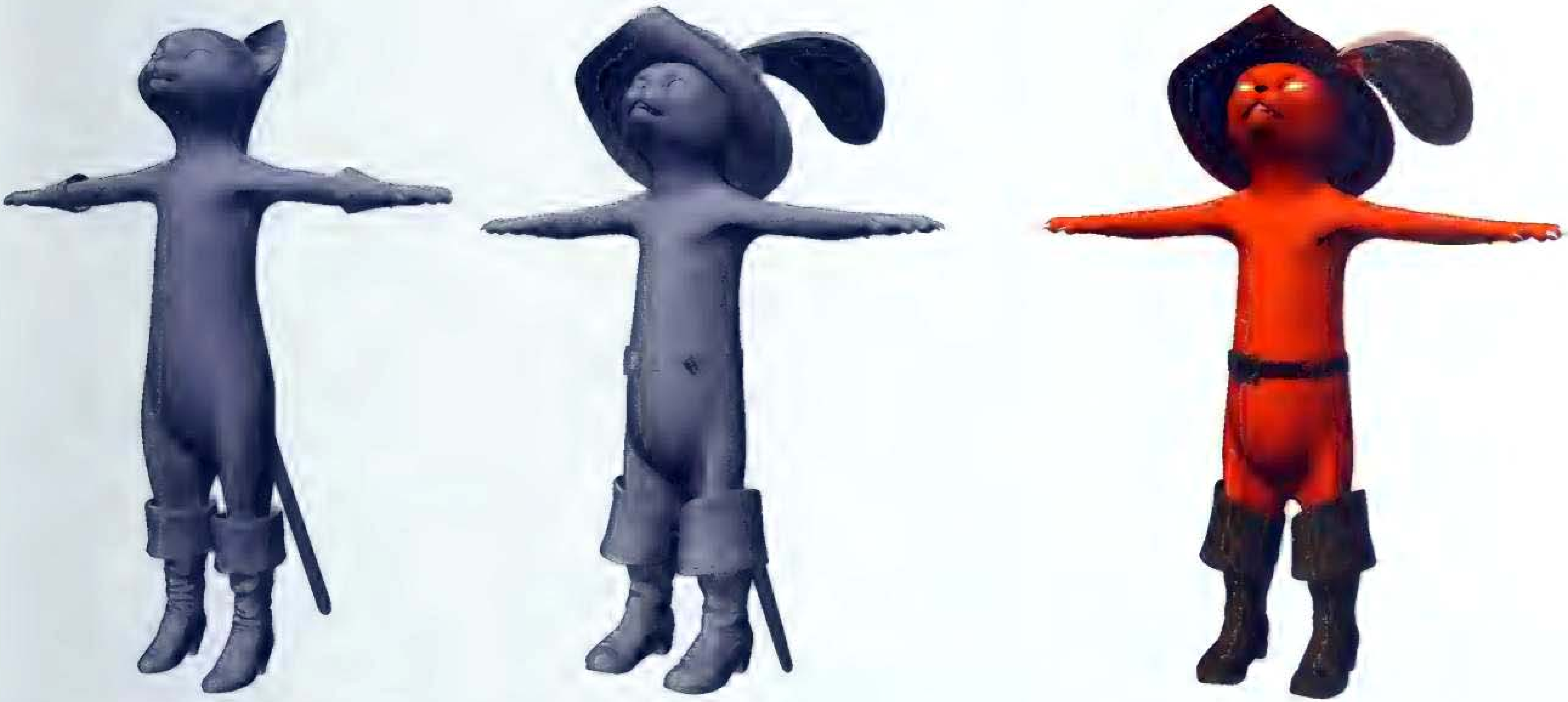
"One of the biggest challenges of animating the Cat Cantina scene was bringing as much catness to a typically human dance as possible," says producer Latifa Ouaou. "Moves like the Litter Box and the Scoot will certainly be all the rage in the cat underground. I've watched this scene many times, and it still makes me laugh."

Visual Development

A series of evocative paintings by artist Ronald A. Kurniawan and inspiring storyboards by Bob Logan helped define the right tone for the scene. According to production designer Guillaume Aretos, multiple versions of the Cantina were designed for the scene, which takes place in a somewhat seedy part of town. "We put archways in the interior as a sort of homage to the buildings designed by Gaudí, and we put lots of Spanish tiles and played with asymmetry as well, giving it an opulent, beautiful feel," says the veteran of the Shrek world. "It was great fun to put in artifacts that were supposedly made by cats. Then, there is a sophisticated tap system of milk distribution that provides the cats with their favorite refreshment. What's great about this particular scene is that we were able to put in lots of details that people won't be able to discover at first. When they watch the film at home on DVD, they can use the Pause button and look closely at all the funny things on the walls and around the cantina."

Opposite | 575 Storyboards | Paul Fisher and Bob Persichetti | digital
Top left | Cat Cantina Bar Plan and Elevation | Paul Westacott | digital
Top right | Cat Cantina Design | Paul Westacott | digital
Above | Cat Cantina Stage | Paul Westacott | digital

Above | Storyboards | Bob Logan | digital
Opposite | Model Kitty and Model Puss | Tony Williams and Brian Jeffcoat | digital



Modeling

"We were really confident about the design rules set by art director Christian Schellewald, as this was just our second set for the movie," notes modeling supervisor Tony K. Williams. "What comes across is the richness of the models. We took time to make sure the tables looked like they were made with primitive tools. There are no sharp edges, and the scene's meticulous source-based lighting really shows that off. I think the handmade touch ended up looking really beautiful."

Using Maya and proprietary software created at the studio, the modeling team worked on the environment, set dressing, and props for six weeks. The modeling team built 33 models for the environment and created 167 models for the set dressing and various props that appear in the scene. The goal was to bring as much detail to the room without making the job too heavy to render.

According to Williams, the key challenge was to create a room that was right for cats. "We didn't want it to be too big, like a warehouse, so we had to go through numerous iterations in terms of the height of the ceiling and the size of the cat bar," he says. "In the end, we created a space that felt like it was made by humans, but it was intimate enough for our cats."

SURFACING

The surfacing team, led by Ken Hebert, worked closely with the modeling and rigging departments to make sure the interior details of the cantina looked as realistic as possible. That meant surfacing entire walls and ceilings, as well as detailed mosaic tile work, tables, chairs, set dressing, and glass surfaces.

"One of the most challenging aspects of this sequence was creating some custom high-resolution rigs for the mosaic floor, because we had some tighter shots of the cats' boots as they are dancing," recalls Hebert. "Because the cameras are all over the place, what works in a wide shot may not work on the tighter ones."

The detailed fur grooming for all the generic cats featured in the scene was also a top priority. The various feline shapes had to be propagated through the studio's crowd system, and adjustments had to be made to each background character in conjunction with the lighting team. Long, medium, and short grooms, as well as different color-texture maps, were created for the extras. "Anything that you see that has a color and texture is done by the surfacing department," explains Hebert. "Without surfacing, Puss would be a bald, grey cat!"

RIGGING

While Puss had an existing rig and a way of moving that animators were able to work with right off the bat, Kitty was a challenge. She makes her first appearance as a masked stranger and needs to be believable as a male cat. The first attempt made her look like a female wearing a mask—which is exactly what "he" was. The rigging team beefed up her design so she could be posed in a very confident, powerful manner.

Using DreamWorks Animation's proprietary tool Rig, the team spent about a year revising Puss and Kitty. "We knew who Puss was, but we had to 'hero' him up so that he could carry the movie emotionally and physically," says rigging head Nathan Loofbourrow. "Kitty was a lot more work, because we had to go back and redefine her character. What feels right in a painting may not work in CG. She is the linchpin in the relationship between Puss and Humpty."

The scene also features about a hundred extras, offering close to thirty variations on the basic cat model. That meant creating background feline characters with various fur lengths and different

Top | Kitty Masked | Surfacing by Soo King (Kitty) and Carson McKay (mask) | digital
Above | Kitty Rig | Rigging by Christina de Jaun and Dominic Bilodeau | digital
Opposite, top two | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina | Dominique Louis | digital
Opposite, bottom four | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina | Lighting by Gregory Yepes | digital

body shapes. This was a much more demanding crowd-support task than might be needed for a scene involving humans. All told, it took about twenty-five weeks to rig the various quadruped cat extras.

Lighting

The richness of the set and the presence of numerous candles and different sources of illumination kept the lighting team busy for four and a half months. The crowd of roaming cats also needed to be brightened after the rigging and surfacing departments had done their initial work. "Because of the number of cats in the scene, we had to light them in regions, so it became quite a juggling act," says CG supervisor Gregory Yepes. "We had to light them all differently, but the more unique we make it, the more costly it becomes to render. So we had to strike the right balance between the complexity of the shots and aesthetic results."

The team also had to make sure that the lighting treatment was different on Kitty's black fur. She required a brighter spotlight and a

strong rim definition, because it was important for both dancers to stand out. As a result, every shot had to be evaluated objectively.

"We had little time to deliver the scene, so we had to split the layers to balance in Nuke [compositing software]," explains Yepes. "If the environment was too saturated, we took the layer in Nuke and took the saturation down. Overall, we were allowed to use lots of different light treatments and make the scene pop with color. This was a party, so were justified to go with it!"

Visual Effects

Throughout the making of a movie, the visual effects team carries the huge burden of making some of the most spectacular and visually challenging scenes come to life. Although Sequence 500 (the Cat Cantina sequence) wasn't as demanding as the scenes depicting the Cloud World, the beanstalk, and the climactic destruction of the bridge by Mama Goose, it certainly had its share of labor-intensive demands.

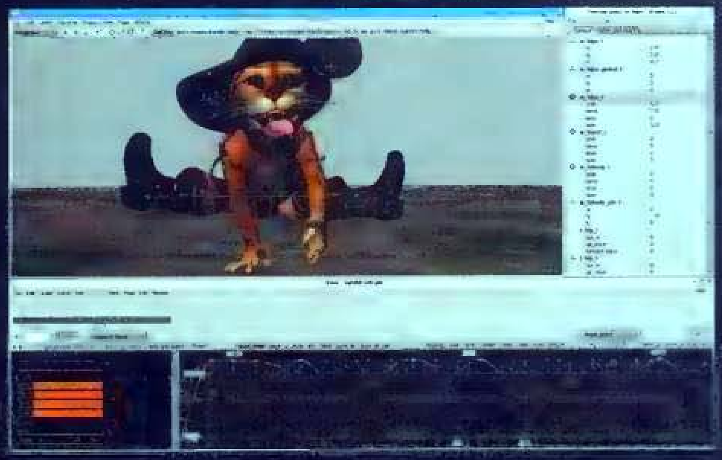
When Kitty kicks a pan filled with milk, the liquid can't just simply splash on the bar. Some of the milk has to remain in the pan, and the rest has to fly through the air. Since the heavily art-directed scene is depicted in stylized slow motion that spans three panels, the VFX team had a lot on its plate. The crew used a fluid/milk solver called RealFlow, followed by some procedural postprocessing in Houdini. (The FX artist on this task was Robert Chen, supervised by head of FX Amaury Aubel.)

"Because of the art direction, we needed to get very specific shapes out of the flying milk," explains visual effects supervisor Ken Bielenberg. "We wanted to get a stereo-3D moment when the milk flies out of the pan and into the audience."

Keep in mind that having a bar full of furry characters created a large volume of data and required many hours of expensive rendering time. The rich environment, the tile work, the dramatic lighting, and a black cat dancing against a dark background introduced a tremendous amount of additional detail to iron out. "It was definitely not an easy sequence, but as soon as I saw the results, it became one of my favorite scenes in the whole movie," admits Bielenberg.

The Cat Cantina scene, just like Kitty Softpaws, casts a certain spell.

Top | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina | FX by Robert Chen and Landon Gray | digital
Opposite, top | Curtain FX | Corey Bolwyn | digital
Opposite, middle, left and right | Sequence 500 – Cat Cantina – Animation Work in Progress | Steve Meyer and Olivia Staphylas | digital
Opposite, bottom left | Crowd FX | David Bazelon | digital
Opposite, bottom right | CFX Cape | Jeff Martin | digital
Following pages | A Cat Cantina Catfight | Ronald A. Kurniawan | digital



CONCLUSION

We have all grown so accustomed to seeing visually spectacular CG-animated movies in theaters these days that it is easy to forget that each film arrives in theaters after undergoing years of planning, development work, art design, production, and fine-tuning by huge teams of dedicated professionals. Many of these people work at DreamWorks Animation. The amount of love and detailed work that has gone into each frame of a film like *Puss In Boots* is a reflection of the high standards for which the studio aims.

When you look back at the rich history of animation over the past century, the movies that have become timeless classics are those that are both visually interesting and offer stories and characters that truly fascinate. These types of films are able to resonate with audiences regardless of age, culture, or geography. That's why the storytellers and artists behind *Puss In Boots* didn't want to give us just another take on a familiar fairy tale. They built their thrilling story of betrayal and redemption around characters that can make us laugh and move us at the same time. Inspired by the likes of Goya and Gaudí, they never shied away from grand visuals and subtle motifs while at the same time avoiding making the project feel like a trip to a European art museum.

It's also important to remember that a fantastic tale can never take off unless it is truly grounded in the real world. The technical team took bold steps and experimented with new technologies to deliver remarkable sequences that push the envelope when it comes to the authentic depiction of objects, backgrounds, and characters. When you factor in the stereoscopic 3D elements of each scene, you get an idea of what a complicated task it was to realize each scene and how impressive it is that Puss's world is so eye-popping and immersive.

What's truly inspiring, though, is to observe is how the various departments worked closely together to bring out the best in each other. Just like a beautifully designed machine invented by Humpty, the various teams at the studio complemented each other to raise the bar and produce a final product that is artistically accomplished, entertaining, and heartfelt.

In the final moments of the film, Puss bids farewell to Kitty and rides away on his horse. He has learned a few life lessons and has perhaps become a better cat. He has also dazzled us with his many talents and given us a glimpse of what it's like to be passionate about your life and work, very much like the men and women who helped bring this movie to the big screen.

Opposite, top | *Puss In Boots* DreamWorks Animation, Glendale, CA, crew | photograph by Nathan Chadwick
Opposite, bottom | *Puss In Boots* DreamWorks Animation, Redwood City, CA, crew | photograph by Brian Immel
Above | I Am Puss In Boots | Wooyoung Jung | digital
Following pages | Puss and Humpty Look Out from the Bell Tower | Nathan Fowkes | digital

Above | Puss Rides into the Sunset | Woonyoung Jung | digital

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this book to my family and friends for their constant love. Thanks for listening to me go on and on for months about the adventures of a swashbuckling cat! The wait is over: Now we can all put on our 3D glasses and enjoy the ride together! As Puss would say, *"Gracias por todo, mis amigos!"*

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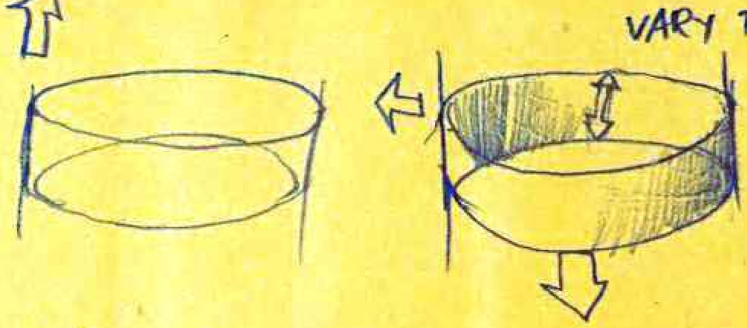

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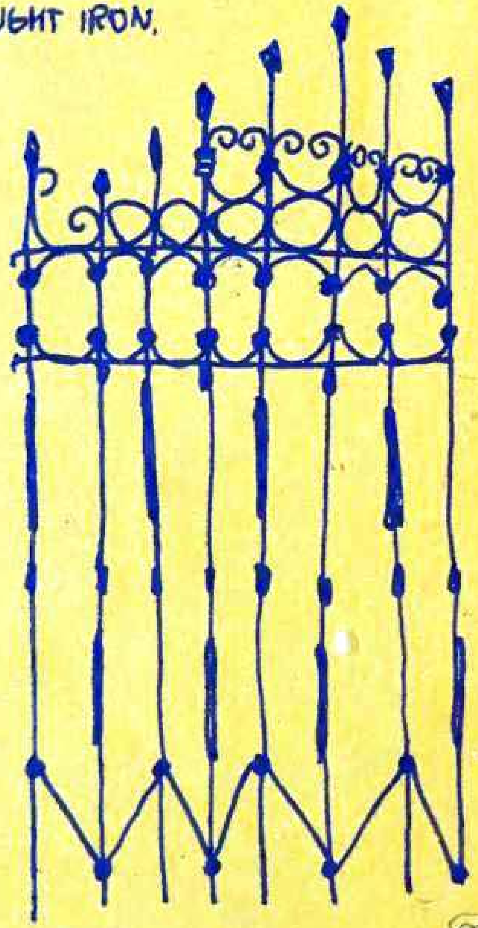

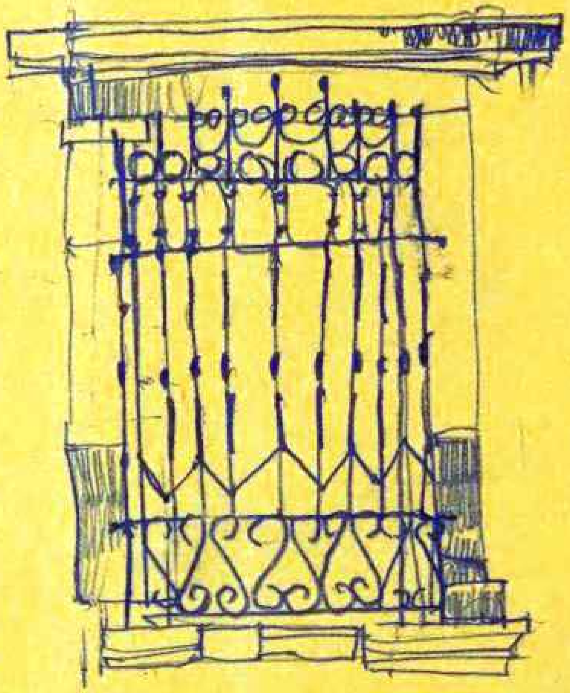

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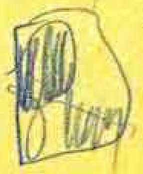

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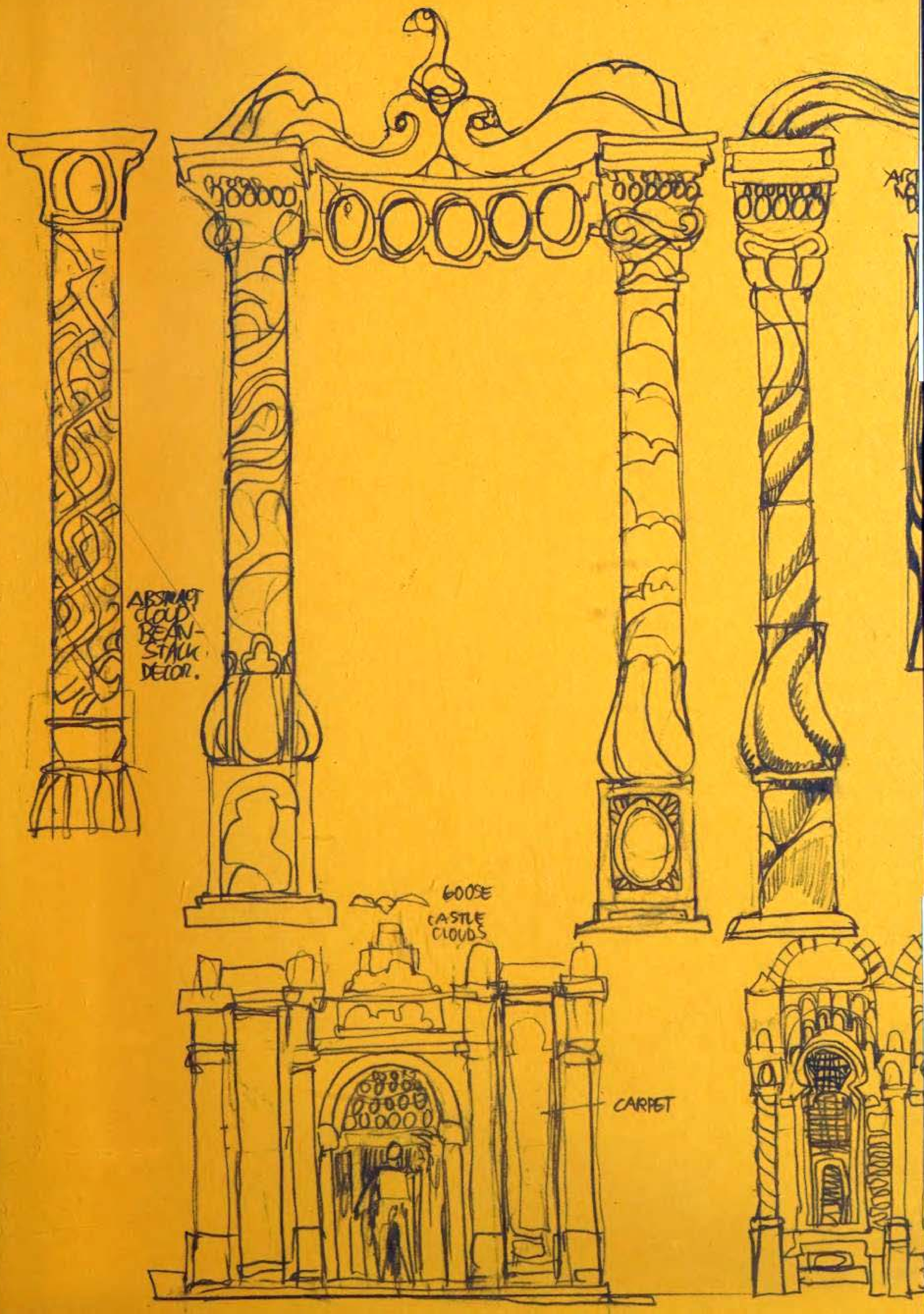

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